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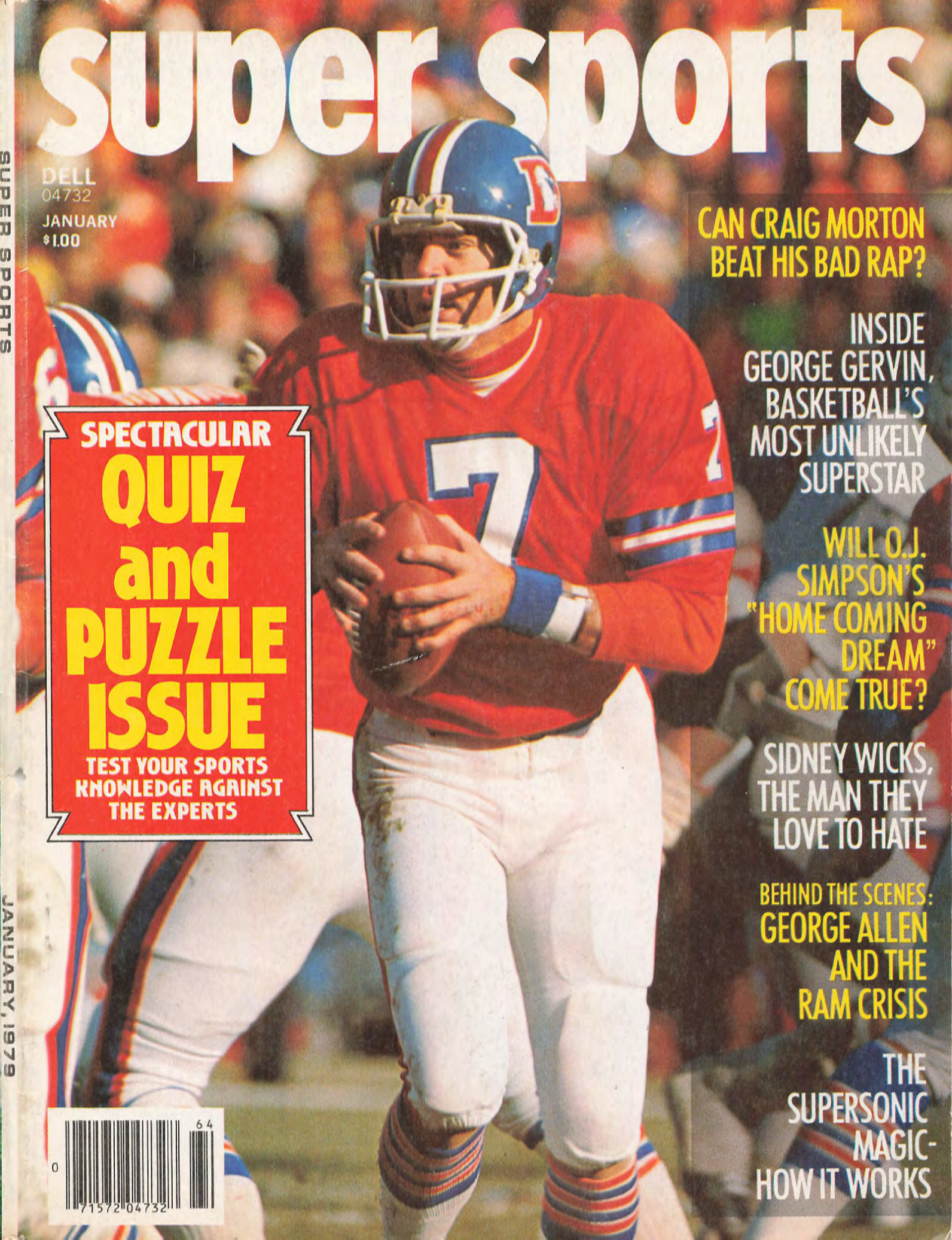

SPECTACULAR QUIZ and PUZZLE ISSUE

TEST YOUR SPORTS KNOWLEDGE AGAINST THE EXPERTS

CAN CRAIG MORTON BEAT HIS BAD RAP?

INSIDE GEORGE GERVIN, BASKETBALL'S MOST UNLIKELY SUPERSTAR

WILL O.J. SIMPSON'S "HOME COMING DREAM" COME TRUE?

SIDNEY WICKS, THE MAN THEY LOVE TO HATE

BEHIND THE SCENES: GEORGE ALLEN AND THE RAM CRISIS

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SUPER SPORTS

JANUARY, 1979

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THERE'S THAT BIG STIFF AGAIN, SHOWING OFF IN FRONT OF GRACE AND THE CROWD. WELL IT'S MY TURN THIS TIME!
WHAM! - NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO DRY UP AND BLOW AWAY!
OH, MAC! YOU ARE A REAL MAN AFTER ALL!

INSIDE THE LOCKER ROOM

Dear Sirs:
First I wish to congratulate you on dedicating your May and September Issues to the growing sport of soccer. All too often it's left out of sports magazines. But myself along with many other soccer fans are disappointed at the lack of soccer products from the various NASL teams available to us such as jersey, posters, etc. How many people do you see wearing a Cosmos' jersey? Perhaps you can supply your readers with mailing addresses for some of the top teams so the wide open market of soccer paraphernalia can be expanded.

Michael L. Barry
Johnson City, Tn.

Dear Sirs:
I am a junior in high school and really enjoy reading Super Sports Magazine. I really look forward to each issue.

I am a Denver Bronco fan. My mom is a Dallas Cowboy fan, and my little brat brother is a Miami Dolphin fan, yet the three of us have the same favorite player. He is Franco Harris.

I hope in the future you will write more about him.

I would also like to write to him. Please let me know how I can write him. I understand he has quite an interest in youngsters.

Thanks again for a great magazine.

Reginald Allen
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

(You can write to Franco Harris care of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Three Rivers Stadium, 300 Stadium Circle, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15212.)

Dear Sirs:
I would appreciate it if you would inform me of the address of the Cosmos Soccer Club.

M. McGee
West Chesterfield, N.H.

(The Cosmos headquarters is in Giants Stadium, Meadowlands Complex, New Jersey.)

Dear Sirs:
Im am the sports editor of the Evening Times in Glasgow—Scotland's largest selling evening paper. In the States on a recent business trip, I bought a copy of Super Sports and was impressed.

Your coverage of soccer personalities is splendid. But I wonder if it would be of value to the magazine to include coverage of the current European scene. Since much of the soccer boom in the States seems to be fuelled by immigrants, I think this would very well be the case.

Robert Jeffrey
Glasgow, Scotland

Dear Sirs:
What's wrong with the Dodgers? Can't those knuckleheads recognize they have one of the greatest players of his time in Steve Garvey? I think Don Sutton was way out of line when he badmouthed Garvey by saying Reggie Smith rather than Garvey was the most valuable player on the Los Angeles team. Day in and day out Garvey just does his job. Not only has he the best glove at first base in the National League, he's always around .300, give or take a few points.

I think the other Dodgers are envious of Steve. After all, how many of them have had a high school named after them the way Steve has?

That Sutton should get into a brawl with Garvey at a time when the Dodgers are in the pennant fight of their lives shows just how stupid all this Garvey baiting is. Come on, guys, let's grow up a bit. The loyal Dodger fan is looking for a World Series title and not a World's Heavyweight Championship. Let's get back to playing baseball and leave the slugging to Muhammed Ali.

John Greddor
Los Angeles

Dear Sirs:
I'm a Denver Bronco fan and I think it's terrible the way people are saying that Craig Morton can't win the big one. I'd like to say that Morton won a lot of big games last year. The Broncos were 12-2 on the season. He won a very big one from the Oakland Raiders in the playoffs, otherwise the Broncos wouldn't have been in the Super Bowl.

The fact that Morton didn't have a good day in the Super Bowl was just as much the fault of the offensive line as his. The Broncos' forward wall were no match for the Cowboys' Doomsday Defense. If there is blame to be had, let's pass it around where it belongs. Quarterbacks don't buckle, offensive lines do. I don't care how good you are, you can't throw a bomb when you're flat on your back.

Morton proved he is at least the second best quarterback in the NFL by getting his team to the Super Bowl. This year he'll prove he's the best by getting the Broncos their Super Bowl rings.

Go you Orange Crush!

Bill Martin
Denver

Dear Sirs:
I'm sick and tired of all the newspaper talk about how the Mets got taken in the Tom Seaver deal. Let's look at the record. As I am writing this, Seaver is 11 and 12 on the year, which makes him less than a .500 pitcher. He's been in an out all season—slumps, injuries, you name it.

The Mets have three every day ball players around whom they can build for the future. They all came in return for Seaver. They're all young, they're all talented, they're all going to be around for a long time after Seaver is through.

Doug Flynn is hitting at about .240 and may be the best glove man there is in the National League at second. Steve Henderson is around .280, and would have been over .300 if he hadn't been hit on the elbow early in the season and as a result been unable to swing a bat with his full power for almost six weeks. Pat Zachry was an All Star pitching selection and has developed a change of pace which is little short of sensational. He's given every indication that he'll be one of the best when he reaches his peak.

You can argue that from a sentimental standpoint, the Mets owed Seaver more loyalty for what he'd done for them in the past. I'll buy that. But if you're talking pure baseball value, you have to admit the Mets got all the best of the Seaver deal.

Chris Bolton
Wantaugh, N.Y.

Dear Sirs:
When are you and the rest of the sports magazines going to get with it? Year after year you forget about the Cubs. And year after year the Cubs are right in the middle of the pennant fight. They've got the best relief pitcher there is in Bruce Sutter. Dave Kingman is the most feared slugger in the game. Bobby Murcer is a tremendous outfielder. I could go on and on.

Herman Franks has done an outstanding job. He's a lot better manager than Billy Martin, but everybody keeps saying how good Martin is.

Come on, let's get with it. Give the Cubs the credit they deserve.

R. Lang
Skokie, Ill.

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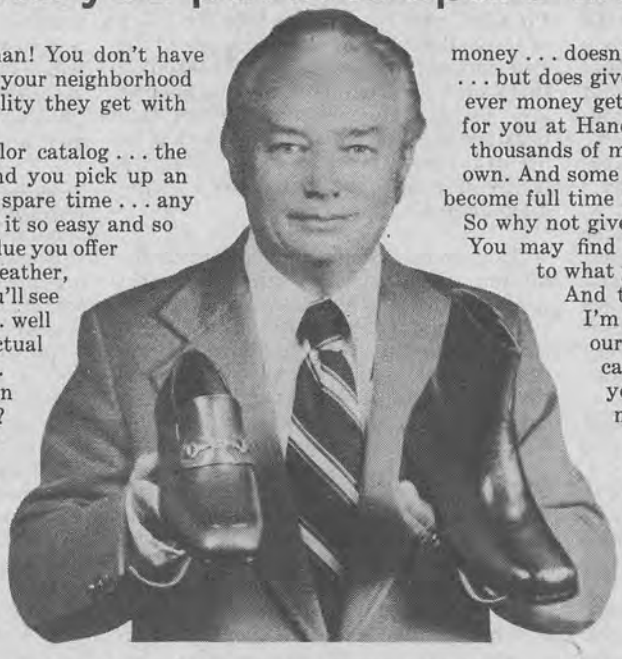

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From The Sport Wire

Mystery man. A number of people are speculating on what the "real" Tony Dorsett is like. Finding out may prove as difficult as solving the riddle of the Sphinx. Even the sensational Cowboy running back's coach, Tom Landry, isn't quite sure. Says Landry of Dorsett, "I don't think we've seen his real personality yet. He's been surrounded by so much publicity he's put a wall around himself to some extent. I think it will melt away eventually."

* * *

A matter of attitude. Detroit Tiger slugger Rusty Staub contends a consistent attitude is the best way to insure a top diamond career. Consistency to him includes awakening at the same time every morning, taking a nap at the same time every afternoon and even carrying bottled water with him for drinking on road trips.

Says Staub, "I know a lot of kids on this team think I'm a fantatic, and they're right.

"I know that if I didn't pay attention to all those details the way I do, I'd be back in Houston or New Orleans or doing something else instead of playing baseball.

"Pete Rose said something the other day that really reflects the way I feel about the game. He said he goes at it as hard as he can every single day. He said there aren't too many guys who can do that, and I agree.

"It is hard to do. Pete learned that a long time ago, and so did I. It's hard to go out there with a fresh attitude every day. But that's something I've disciplined myself to do. And it's meant more than anything else I've done.

"I can't remember the last time I didn't go out and bust my butt. I know there were a couple of times when I was a kid and I pouted, but that was a long time ago.

"Whether you're hurt or you're tired or what, you've got to go out there with a fresh attitude every day. I think that's the No. 1 important thing."

* * *

Too much thinking can be bad for a hitter. At least that's the way the Red Sox star catcher Carlton Fisk sees it. Comments Fisk, "Every now and then I find myself thinking too much. What I have to do is get into the proper stance, avoid pulling my head off and swing.

"Last year I was hitting about .350 in July, then went into a slump, primarily because I was tired." (A catcher's legs take a terrific amount of wear and tear as a result of his crouching behind the plate day in and day out.) "I had to open up my stance so I could handle the inside pitch.

"Once I realized the problem, I took off at the plate and hit .378 in September."

* * *

Getting to know you. That may have been the refrain of Rodgers and Hammerstein's hit tune from "The King And I", but it is more than a love song when a pro coach and his star quarterback are involved. In trying to build a solid relationship between himself and Jim Plunkett, new head coach Pete McCulley of the San Francisoc 49ers, suggested the two work out together in the off season. "I think the relationship has to be as good as any between two human beings can possibly be," notes McCulley. "Both of us are in the same pressure cooker. He's the leader, he's the quarterback. We live and die together."

* * *

Good old days department. Mention the all-time great backstops and you might neglect Birdie Tebbetts. Mention the smartest and Tebbetts would have to go right to the top of the list. He spent a lifetime as a major league catcher and then as a manager. And when the 68-year-old sage talks, people with a half a brain listen. This is what he's been saying lately.

On troubled locker rooms: "We always had moaners. Heck, when I played and when I managed, even in well discplined situations, players screamed and yelled in dissent, and I certainly didn't mind.

"But the writers then, contrasted with the media now, didn't report every difference of opinion. They seemed to understand we simply were human beings who, like everyone else, took a drink, argued and let off steam."

On outfielders electing for the one-handed catch: "Some players get into the bad habit of snatching the ball one-handed with such poor body position that they need to take two or three strides before getting the ball out of their gloves. Otherwise, I don't object to it.

"For instance, I found that Leon Wagner, a poor outfielder making two-handed catches, was pretty good when he used just his glove."

On the new style of claw-shaped catcher's mitts: "I don't like the catcher's glove shaped like a first baseman's glove or an apple turnover because the catcher has no feel or control of the pitch to the outer or small fingers' part of the mitt.

"This, in my opinion, accounts for so many passed balls now. I believe the challenge is to come up with some kind of rubber or leather reinforcement at the outer edge of the catcher's mitt."

* * *

Playing it cool. Elvis Peacock brings formidable credentials into his rookie year with the Rams. The former Oklahoma running back gained 2,093 collegiate yards on 337 attempts for a solid 6.2 per carry average. But he's not talking about any of that. Comments the erstwhile Sooner, "Individual goals don't mean much to me. They never have. I've never set them. All I wanted when the draft rolled around was to get with a winning program that had a chance to go to the Super Bowl. I'm willing to invest the time to learn the Rams' system, the coaches and my teammates. It can cause a lot of bad feelings among teammates for someone like me to come and say, 'I'm a better running back than anyone else here.' Hey, they're all good. It's just a matter of being ready when my time comes."

* * *

The case against instant replay. Lately NFL officials have been taking a lot of heat about blown calls which influenced the outcome of crucial games. There's been a lot of talk about instituting closed circuit instant replay to second guess the men in striped shirts on key plays. However Dolphin quarterback Bob Griese isn't buying the plan. Says Griese, "I don't see how it would work. They can't always be sure of a perfect angle. The worst thing is that it would slow down the game. We don't need that. They are right 99 percent of the time, but they blew a couple of critical calls last year and everybody got overly excited."

* * *

Aging rapidly. At 26, defensive lineman Derland Moore of the New Orleans Saints shouldn't qualify as a senior citizen. However there's something about knocking heads in the pro grid wars which makes one talk of geriatric problems. Notes Moore, "I can remember what Jake Kupp told me when he retired from the Saints. He said, 'It will be great to get out of this business so I can be called a young man again.'"

* * *

Life with father. American League president Lee MacPhail recalls well the explosive personality and inherent honesty of his father, Larry. Recently, when the late diamond tycoon was inducted into Baseball's Hall of Fame at impressive ceremonies at Cooperstown, New York, it brought more than a touch of nostalgia to his son's voice.

Said Lee of his dad, "My father always said he'd never accept Hall of Fame induction. But he meant that only because he believed the honor should go to men who won their honors between the foul-lines - the players.

"Larry MaPhail was dynamic, all right, and a promotional genius, but loud and controversial, both quarrelsome and religious and - if he had too many martinis - ready to do battle. But he was quick to forgive and forget and bore no real grudges. I believe he had no real enemies."

* * *

The wrong formula. That's what a number of defensive linemen think of the 3-4 lineup which calls for the down linemen to tie up the offensive line while the line backers rush in to do the job on the opposing quarterback.

Their case is put into words by Cedric Hartman of the San Francisco 49ers. Says Hartman, "I don't care if I maul the offensive tackle to death, if I don't get to the quarterback, I've lost. Sacking the quarterback is what I work for. It's the only glamor there is on the defensive line."

* * *

Change of scene. Hank Stram is enjoying his switch from harried NFL coach (first with the Kansas City Chiefs and then with the New Orleans Sanits) to the serenity of a broadcasting booth. Grins Stram, "Having lunch with your wife might not seem like a big deal, but I can't remember having lunch with Phyllis unless it was one of those luncheons involving the team.

(Continued on Page 61)

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By EMMETT FARRELL

Jim Plunkett, brimming with confidence for the first time as a San Francisco 49er, takes the snag from center and hands off to O.J. Simpson, who slashes through a big hole. Ken MacAfee, a rookie tight end, cuts down the opposition's free safety and Simpson sidesteps the rest of the enemy defenders en route to a touchdown.

It's a familiar scene for Simpson—running for daylight. He'd been doing it for nine NFL seasons as a member of the downtrodden Buffalo Bills. But now he's a 49er at age 31 and may be able to achieve his dream of playing in a Super Bowl.

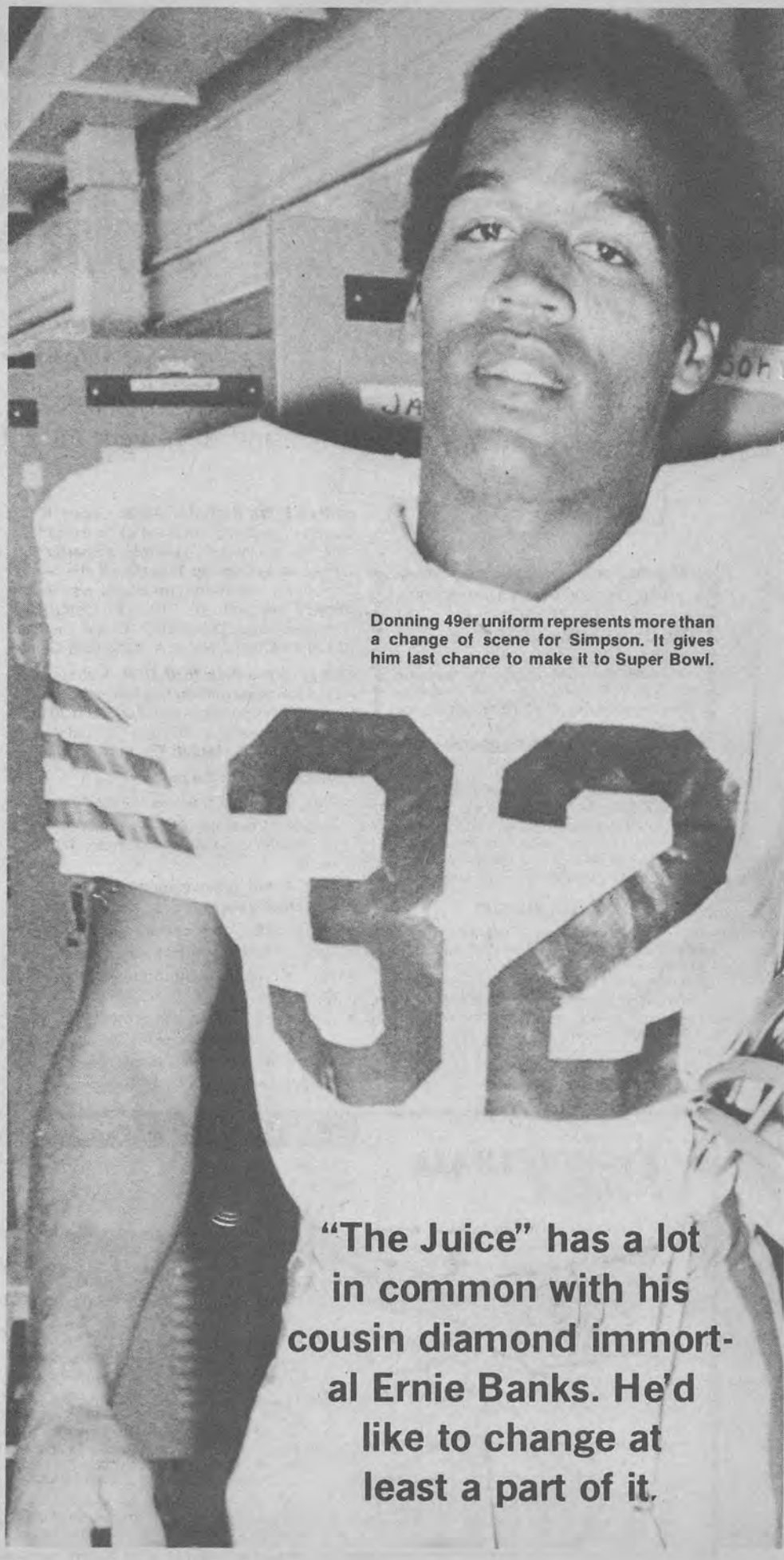
The brilliant running back probably will play only two more seasons. A Super Bowl this season or next may seem like a tall order for the 49ers, especially when the perennially tough Los Angeles Rams again appear to have the talent to stay on top as NFC West champion.

But Joe Thomas—the general manager who had built powerhouses at Minnesota, Miami and Baltimore—has begun wheeling and dealing in an effort to revitalize the 49ers, who were 5-9 last season. Thomas, a master manipulator when it comes to rebuilding clubs, made few changes last season, but once the campaign ended, he began clearing out the deadwood and brought in new faces, most notably O.J.

The acquisition of Simpson for five draft choices spread over three years came on March 24, a sad day for Buffalo fans but a joyous one for Frisco followers. The news came as somewhat of a shock.

Several times over the years, Simpson

Simpson says he's spent his whole adult life in Buffalo. Happy over his move to S.F., he still thinks of Bill teammates.



Donning 49er uniform represents more than a change of scene for Simpson. It gives him last chance to make it to Super Bowl.

"The Juice" has a lot in common with his cousin diamond immortal Ernie Banks. He'd like to change at least a part of it.

WILL O.J. SIMPSON'S "HOME COMING DREAM" COME TRUE?

In Wilbur Jackson (40) Simpson has a backfield running mate who has been a member of the exclusive 1,000 yard club twice.

Until Walter Payton (34) smashed it last year, Simpson held one game rush mark.

Bill quarterback Joe Ferguson believes Buffalo may be helped by Simpson trade.

had pushed for a trade to his home territory on the West Coast, even threatening to quit pro football if a deal wasn't made, and pursue his lucrative outside ventures which included movies and TV commercials.

However, most fans were resigned to the fact that O.J. would finish his pro football career with Buffalo after the 1978 season when his contract ran out.

In an interview early last season before he suffered a knee injury which sidelined him for the last seven games, Simpson noted that retired baseball star Ernie Banks of the Chicago Cubs is his second cousin. Ernie played 19 seasons for the Cubs," O.J. said, "and never got in a World Series. I guess it just runs in the family."

Simpson had put the pressure on Buffalo owner Ralph Wilson after the 1977 season to trade him to a West Coast club, claiming that living in Buffalo had put unnecessary family pressures on him. Wilson didn't want to part with O.J., although he did enter negotiations with the Rams, who actively coveted Simpson.

But Carroll Rosenbloom, the Rams owner, felt Wilson's asking price, running back Lawrence McCutcheon, defensive end Jack Youngblood, tackle Mike Fanning and two top draft choices, was too high.

When the deal fell through, Wilson knew he had to appease O.J. somehow, or the star running back would be quitting the game in his prime.

The answer was money. Wilson swayed O.J. back into the fold with the fattest contract ever given in pro football—$2.3 million over three years plus incentive bonuses based on performance.

Last summer the second greatest running back in NFL history became frustrated and verbally blasted the Bills management for its failure to build a contender.

"After last season," he said, "I thought it was apparent that some changes needed to be made. But they didn't make any. Instead they let two players (offensive linemen Mike Montler and Donnie Green) who had helped the team go." Simpson also pointed out that several former Bills, such as wide receivers Ahmad Rashad and J.D. Hill, are now standouts on other teams.

Continuing his blast, Simpson said, "They just never took the time to develop players here. If a player didn't look good at first, he was gone. You have to give players time. Look at New England, they've got basically the same players now that they had three years ago when we were running all over them."

When the deal with Los Angeles fell through, O.J. felt certain that he would end his career in Buffalo. "It never even crossed my mind that I might be traded," he said. "I'm not going to ask for it."

Simpson added, "I thought it would be wise for the team to trade me for some players to build with, but I've got no hard feelings. I'm a team man all the way. I think it will take a miracle for me to play in a Super Bowl now. But I like to think that I at least always played like a champion."

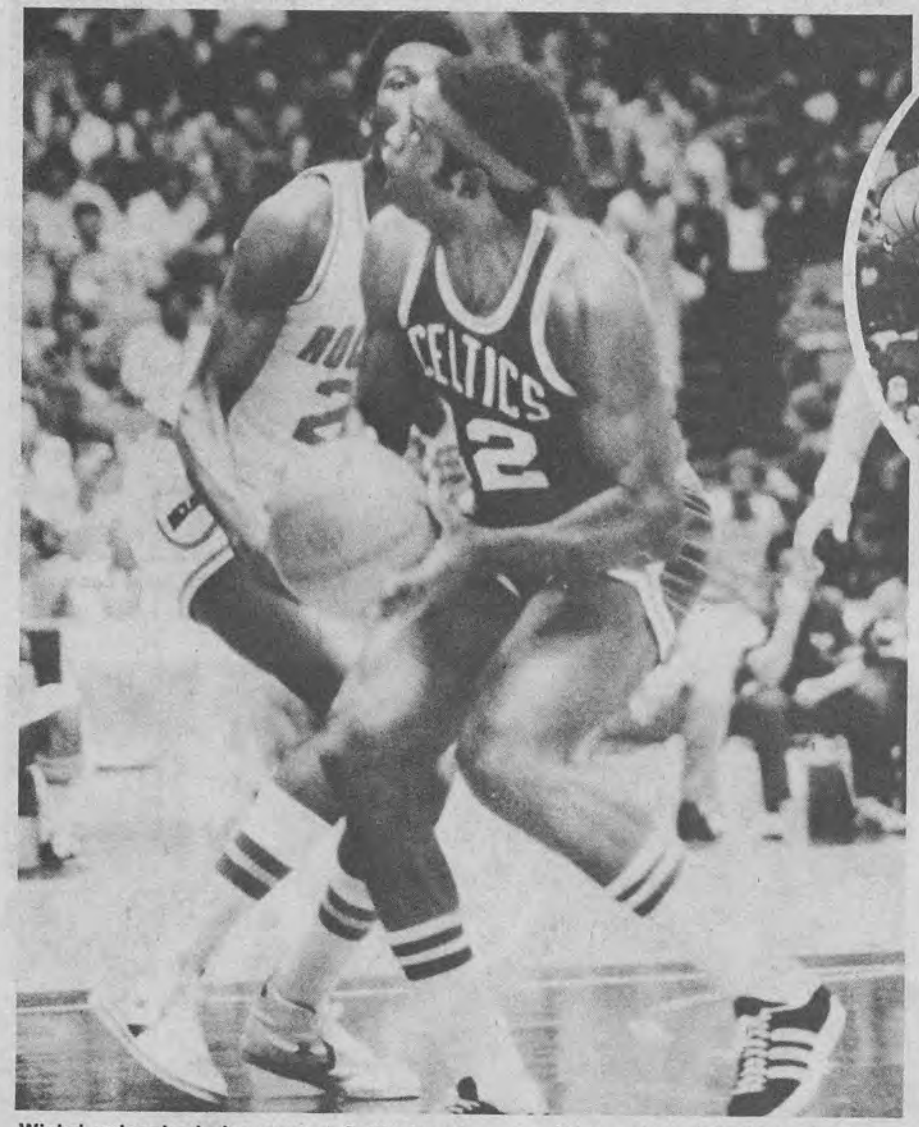
Shortly afterward, Simpson injured his left knee during a humiliating 56-17 setback to the Seattle Seahawks, a second-year expansion club. The loss dropped the Bills' record to 1-6.

(Continued on Page 65)

Rams refused to give up Lawrence McCutcheon as part of Simpson package, stalled O.J.'s move to the west coast.

Arrival of Simpson allowed 49ers to trade Delvin Williams to Dolphins for receiver Freddie Solomon (above).

SIDNEY



Wicks' uninspired play caused Celtic fans to get on him and his $500,000 price tag.

When Charlie Scott (above) broke his arm, it led to Wicks increasing his own salary demands, thus alienating Boston faithful.

By RICHARD BARRON

When you operate in a league where just about everybody is doing his own thing and the hell with the team, you have to be somebody special to generate as much heat as the embattled forward.

It's not easy achieving the title of the most hated man in pro basketball. One has to display the following characteristics.

lack of team loyalty in a league where that quality went out with the push shot;

lack of professionalism in a time when that term means cashing one's check;

self centeredness in an era when team play still wins but run and gun prevails;

talent.

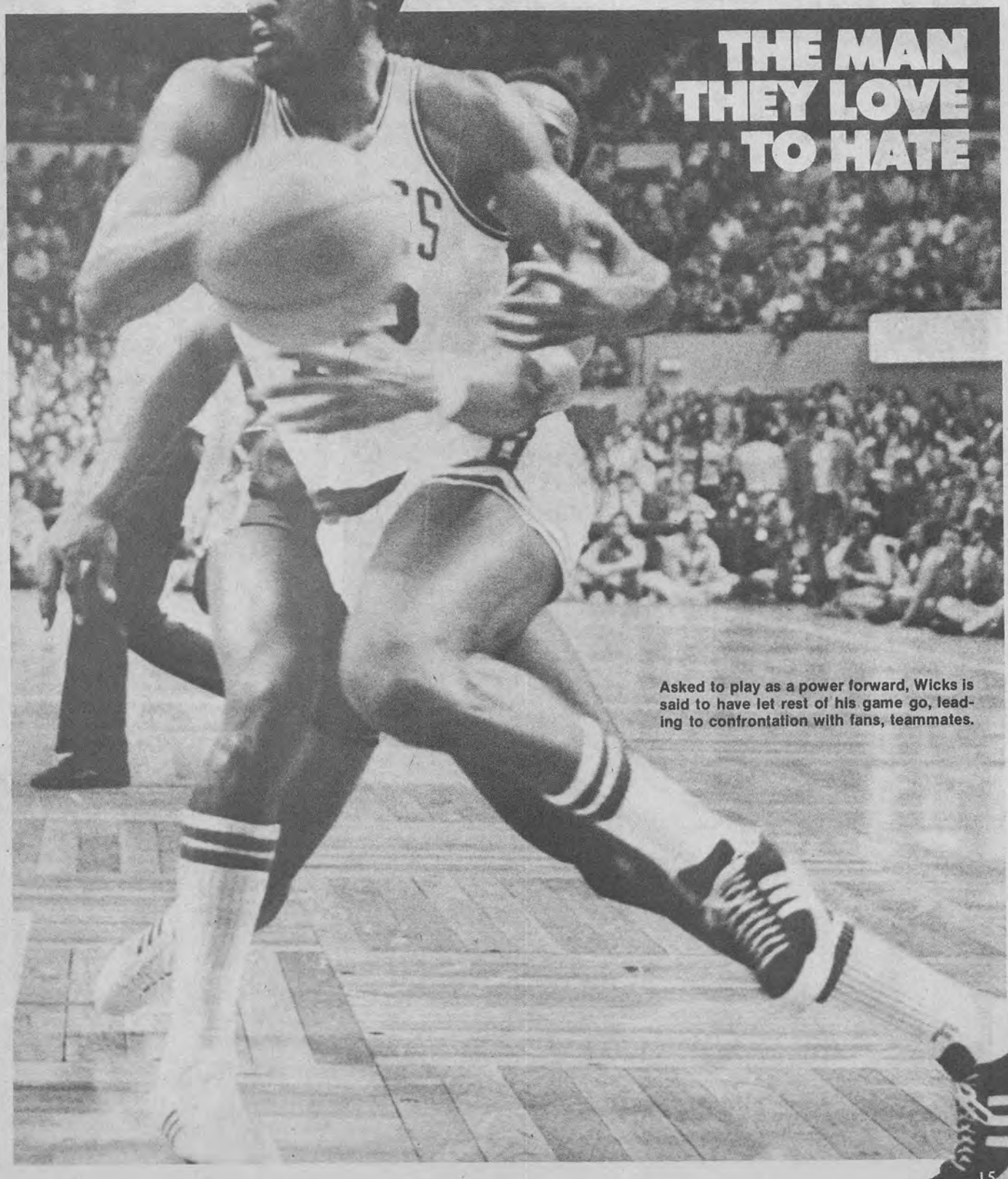
Incredible, instinctive, God given talent—the ability to dart past, drive through and dribble around defenders, to arch the ball into the basket after one does, to stop the opposition from doing the same. Talent without which one can display the previous three characteristics plus flog referees with a wet sweatsock for good measure and still go unnoticed. Because there's nothing that players, coaches and fans alike despise more than waste. And there's nothing more wasteful than unfulfilled talent, no one more noticeable than he who possesses it.

The nominees for most hated man in pro basketball are:

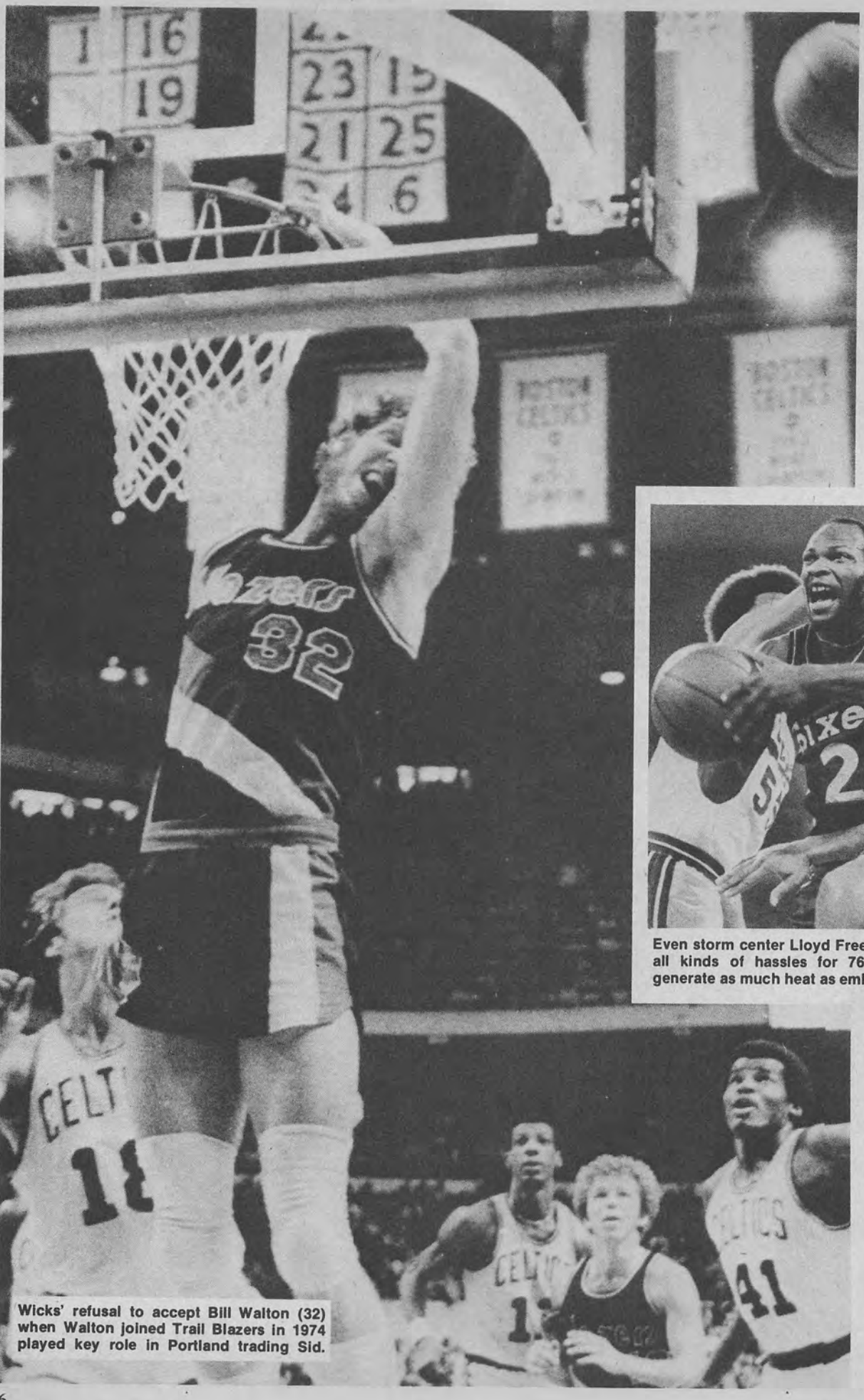
Marvin Barnes for among other acts too numerous to mention, his unforgettable rookie year quote, "If they don't pay me a

WICKS,

THE MAN THEY LOVE TO HATE

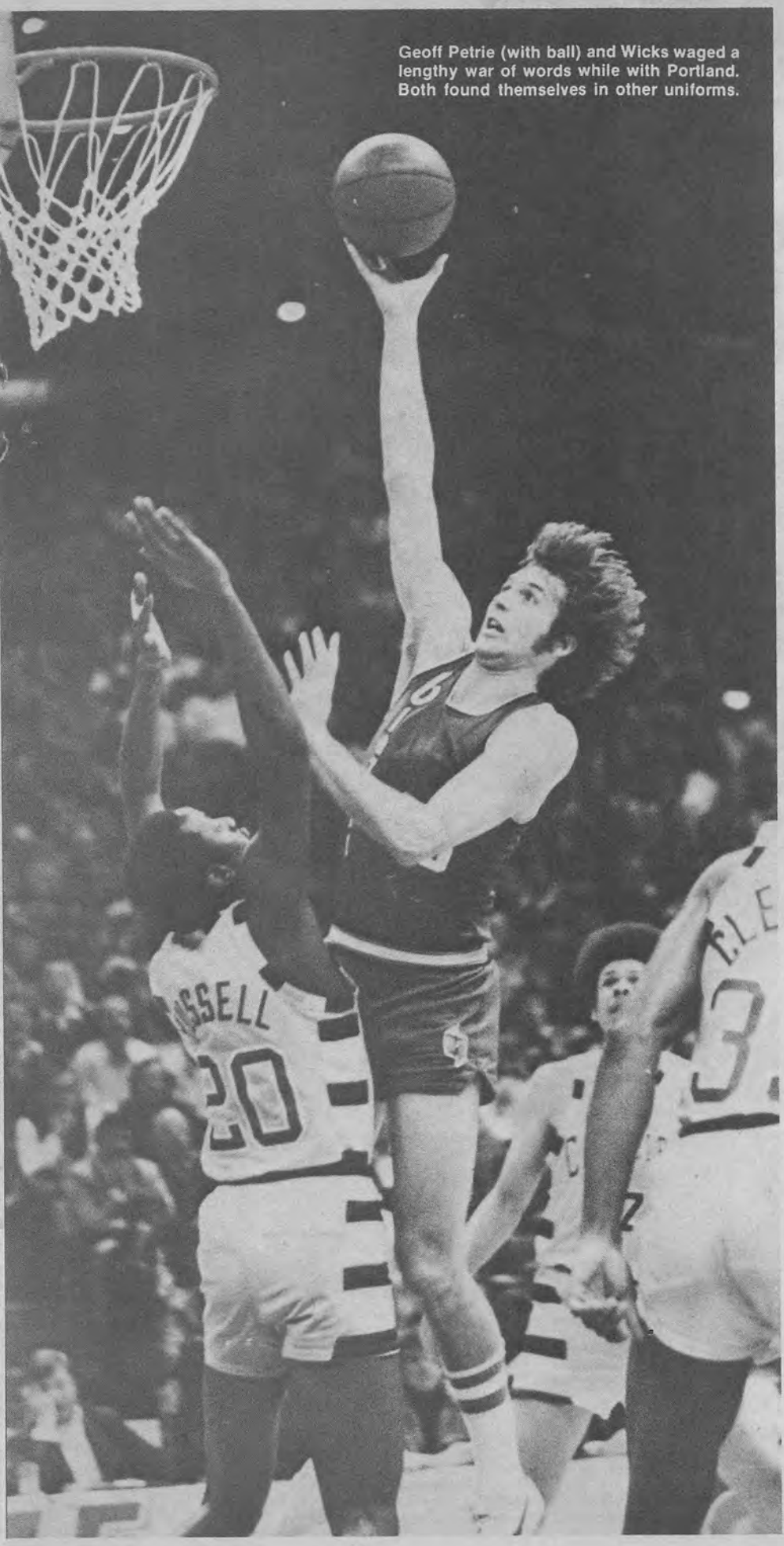


Asked to play as a power forward, Wicks is said to have let rest of his game go, leading to confrontation with fans, teammates.



Even storm center Lloyd Free who created all kinds of hassles for 76ers failed to generate as much heat as embattled Celtic.

Wicks' refusal to accept Bill Walton (32) when Walton joined Trail Blazers in 1974 played key role in Portland trading Sid.



Geoff Petrie (with ball) and Wicks waged a lengthy war of words while with Portland. Both found themselves in other uniforms.

million bucks, I'd rather work in a factory."

Lloyd Free for proclaiming himself "all world" a few years ago and still not proving he can start for his team.

Sidney Wicks.

May I have the envelope please?

And the winner is . . . Sidney Wicks of the Boston Celtics or wherever he's playing by the time this article goes to press. Because if it were up to Celtics' fans and perhaps few players, Sickey Wicks would be playing anywhere but Boston . . . like would you believe Guam?

Sad to say, it wasn't always that way. No, time was when Wicks was a man to look up to—and not because he's six foot nine. After all, hadn't UCLA's John Wooden first noticed him when the latter, at the age of fifteen, lead his lightly regarded Hamilton High School team into the Los Angeles finals and earned a spot on the all city squad? Hadn't Wooden, who was later to call Wicks "the fastest big man I ever coached," commuted between Westwood and Hamilton over the next two years to

Pistons' Marvin Barnes had had his share of troubles in NBA. Many say they are a result of immaturity. Wicks is different.

personally supervise the young man's on-court progress? Unfortunately, Wooden couldn't supervise Wicks' progress off the court as well because despits the fact that Wicks wanted UCLA, UCLA didn't want him—at least not until he improved his grades. And so despite a gym bag full of scholarship offers from most major colleges in the country, Wicks enrolled at Santa Monica Junior College, UCLA's unofficial feeder school, raised his grades, made all-conference to boot, and one year later, achieved his dream . . . well, not quite. Finding himself on the bench for the first time in his life (although the UCLA bench back then was the equivalent of three or four pro teams), Wicks discovered that the freelance brand of basketball he'd played at Hamilton and Santa Monica simply didn't jibe with Wooden's more dis-

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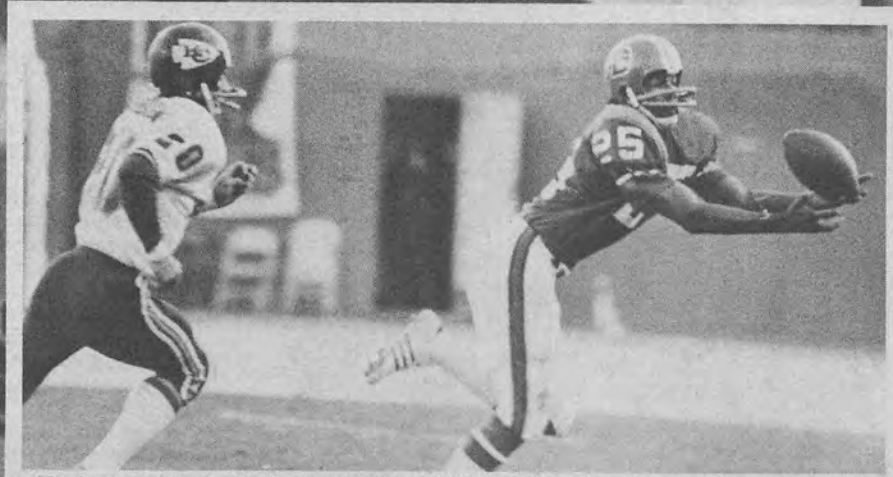
During regular season play, Morton showed that given the proper support he was able to move a team as well as any quarterback.



Morton combined with Haven Moses (25), Rick Upchurch and Riley Odoms to mount a potent aerial attack. But it was to sputter and die when the chips were down.

CAN CRAIG MORTON BEAT HIS BAD RAP?

By MARV SCHNEIDER

Denver Broncos' quarterback Craig Morton has been to three Super Bowls, and all three have been agonizing experiences for him. On two of those occasions, his teammates and coaches shared his disappointment and embarrassment.

In Super Bowl VI, on January 16, 1972, however, Morton suffered alone on the sidelines while his Dallas Cowboys beat the Miami Dolphins 24-3, and finally silenced their critics who had scoffed, and with good reason, that the Cowboys, as talented as they were, could never win the big one. It was Roger Staubach, though, who finally won the big one for Dallas. Morton was little more than a spectator that sunny afternoon as the scrambling former Heisman Trophy winner at Navy quarterbacked and passed Dallas to its first Super Bowl triumph. Morton had to endure his personal disappointment alone, and silently, as Coach Tom Landry sent in play after play and Staubach executed them to perfection, or close to it, Staubach did not pass that often, 19 times, but he completed 12 and two were hauled in for touchdowns by Mike Ditka and Lance Alworth, and Staubach was voted the game's Most Valuable Player.

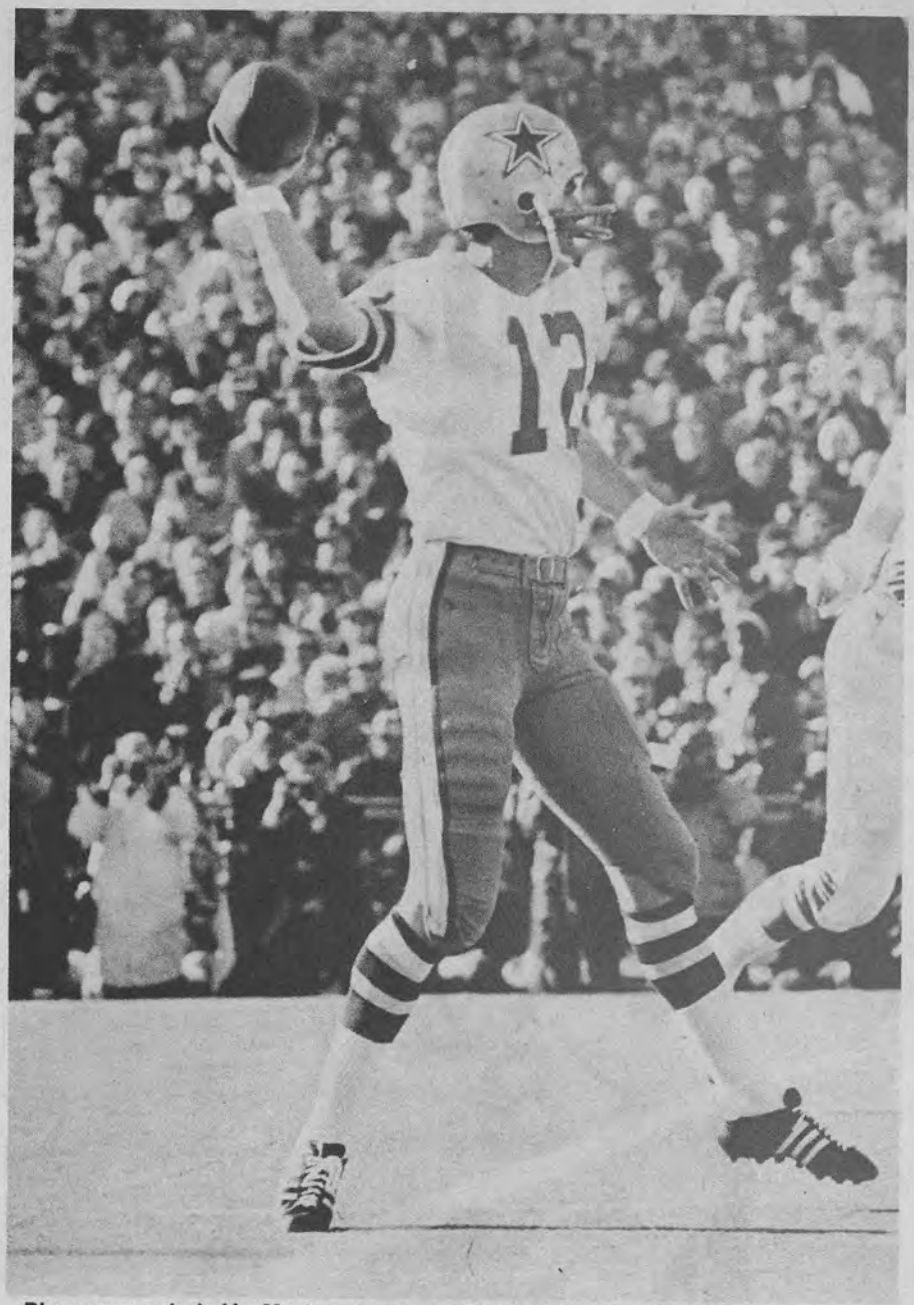
While the Cowboys that day rid themselves of the tag of not being able to win the big game, Morton did not, and it still hangs around his neck like an albatross. So much so, that there are those who say that if the Broncos again make it to the Super Bowl, coach Red Miller would be wise to keep Morton close to him on the sideline, as Landry did in Super Bowl VI, where he can do the least harm. It is an unfortunate and possible even unfair reputation to be stuck with, and especially after Morton led the Broncos to their first AFC championship last year—but those who tag him with it, point to his two dismal performances in the two Super Bowls in which he played.

Morton is the owner of two unenviable Super Bowl records, most interceptions in a single game: four; and most career interceptions: seven.

It goes beyond the interceptions, though. In both his Super Bowl efforts, something seemed to transform Morton into a vastly different type of player than he ordinarily is. In 13 years of playing in the National Football League, Morton es-

Vaunted Steeler defense could not stop Morton as Broncos swept to 12-2 mark in AFC.

They say Tom Landry never forgets. And what he remembers about his erstwhile passer could spell big trouble ahead for the Broncos. Worst of all, it could prove a bad day was more than "one of those things."



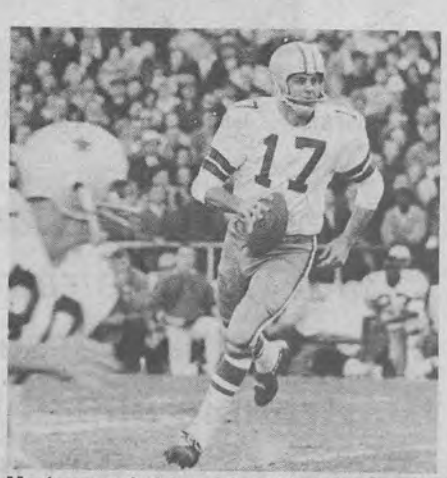
Big game rap started for Morton when Roger Staubach (12) started in the '72 Super Bowl.

tablished solid credentials as a cool field commander, aware of what his players were doing, and where they were, and sensing what the opposing defenses were plotting. He seemed in command of himself and the situation, and not given to taking reckless chances.

In Super Bowl V, which the Cowboys lost to the Baltimore Colts 16-13, and again last January, in the New Orleans Superdome, when his former Dallas teammates beat the Broncos 27-10, Morton bore little resemblance to those descriptions.

Of his performance against the Cowboys last January, the respected football observer from Atlanta, Furman Bisher, wrote that Morton "behaved like a high school kid on the first date. . . fluttery, indecisive and throwing in terror."

Other sports writers and sportscasters, even those who stopped short of putting a "first class quarterback" label on him dur-



Morton was being groomed to take over for the aging Don Meredith (17). However Cowboy coach Tom Landry shelved Dallas' plan.

Bronco coach Red Miller had his hand forced by Tom Landry of Cowboys who dusted off his own charts to reveal "fatal flaw."

Some say Morton suffered with Giants because team did not have hard driving runners such as Broncos' Otis Armstrong (24).

ing his career, agreed that Morotn was completely out of character in his Superdome performance, just as he had been in 1971 in Miami when he quarterbacked the favored Cowboys to their loss to Baltimore.

Interceptions hurt him and Dallas in that 1971 game, but so did his indecisiveness and lack of cool.

The Colts went after Morton early and ferociously, so ferociously that Fred Miller was called for roughing the quarterback, and the Cowboys got inside the Baltimore ten yard line. As Morton went back into the pocket to pass, Duane Thomas broke free of his defender and was in ideal position to take a short pass and go in to score. Morton, however, never saw him, and as he frantically looked around for another receiver, big Bubba Smith battered his way into the protective pocket and dumped Morton to the ground. Landry, on the sideline, never changed his facial expression, but those watching saw him angrily flick his knee with a piece of paper he held in his hand. Morton's first Super Bowl nightmare had begun.

During the first half, he managed to click with Thomas on a short touchdown pass, on a play similar to the one in which Morton failed to spot Thomas in the clear. Mike Clark kicked two field goals, and the Cowboys led 13-6 at the half.

The score stayed that way until midway through the fourth quarter when Morton tried a short pass to Walt Garrison, only to have the ball intercepted by Rich Volk, who returned it to the three yard line. Moments later, Tom Nowatzke barrelled in for a Baltimore touchdown, and Jim O'Brien kicked the extra point which tied the score.

The worst of Morton's day was yet to come. Trying to get Dallas in position for a field goal, he threw the ball a shade too high to Dan Reeves. The ball flicked off Reeves' outstretched fingers, and into the hands of Baltimore's Mike Curtis, who lumbered from the Dallas 40 to the 28 yard line. Earl Morrall, playing in place of Johnny Unitas, who had been injured earlier in the game, moved the Colts three yards in two time-consuming plays, and O'Brien kicked the field goal that won Super Bowl V for Baltimore.

There was time for one play after the kickoff, and it provided a fitting end to a game marred by eleven turnovers. A desperation, shoot-the-works pass by Morton, intended for Garrison, was intercepted by Jerry Logan. It was the third time Morton was intercepted in thet game.

Curtis later explained that he was in position to pick off the interception that led to the game-winning field goal because

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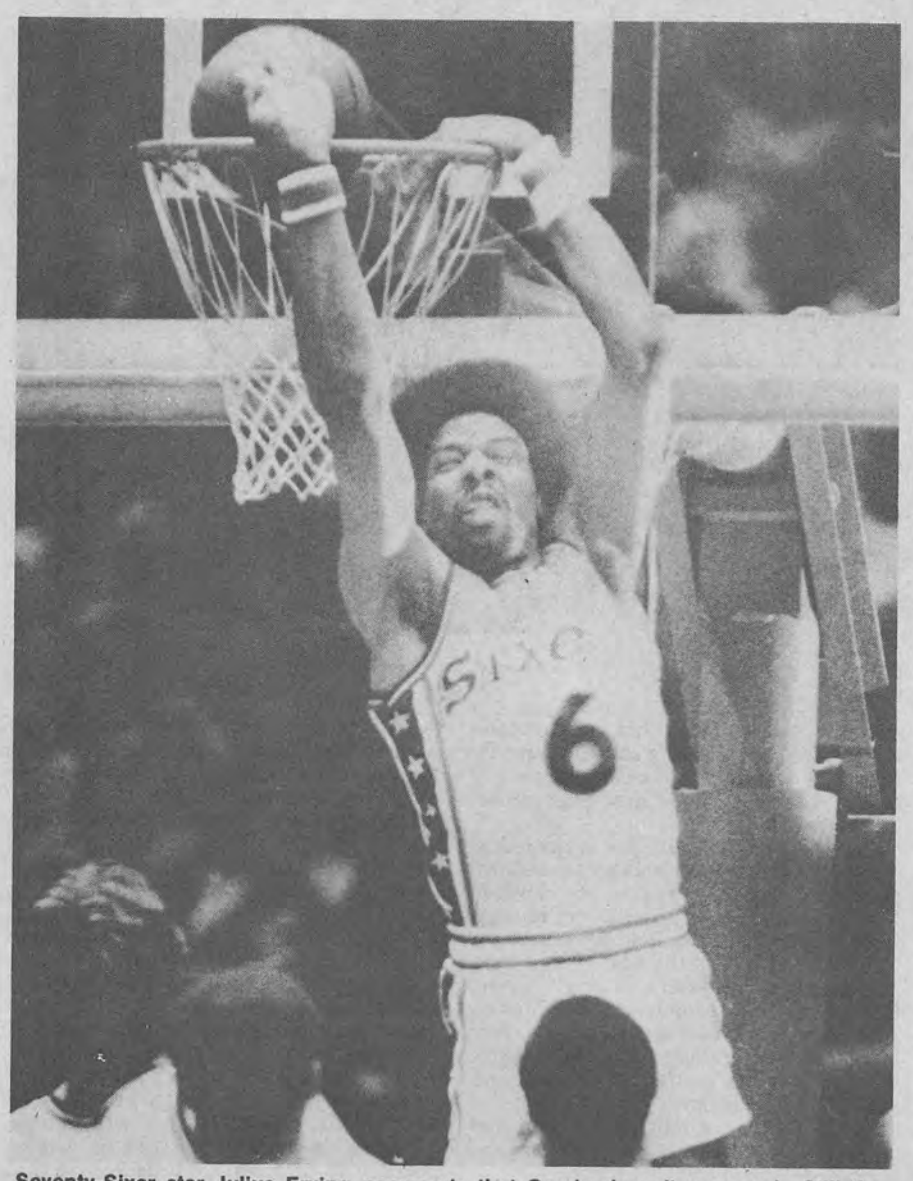
INSIDE GEORGE GERVIN,

BASKETBALL'S UNLIKELY SUPERSTAR



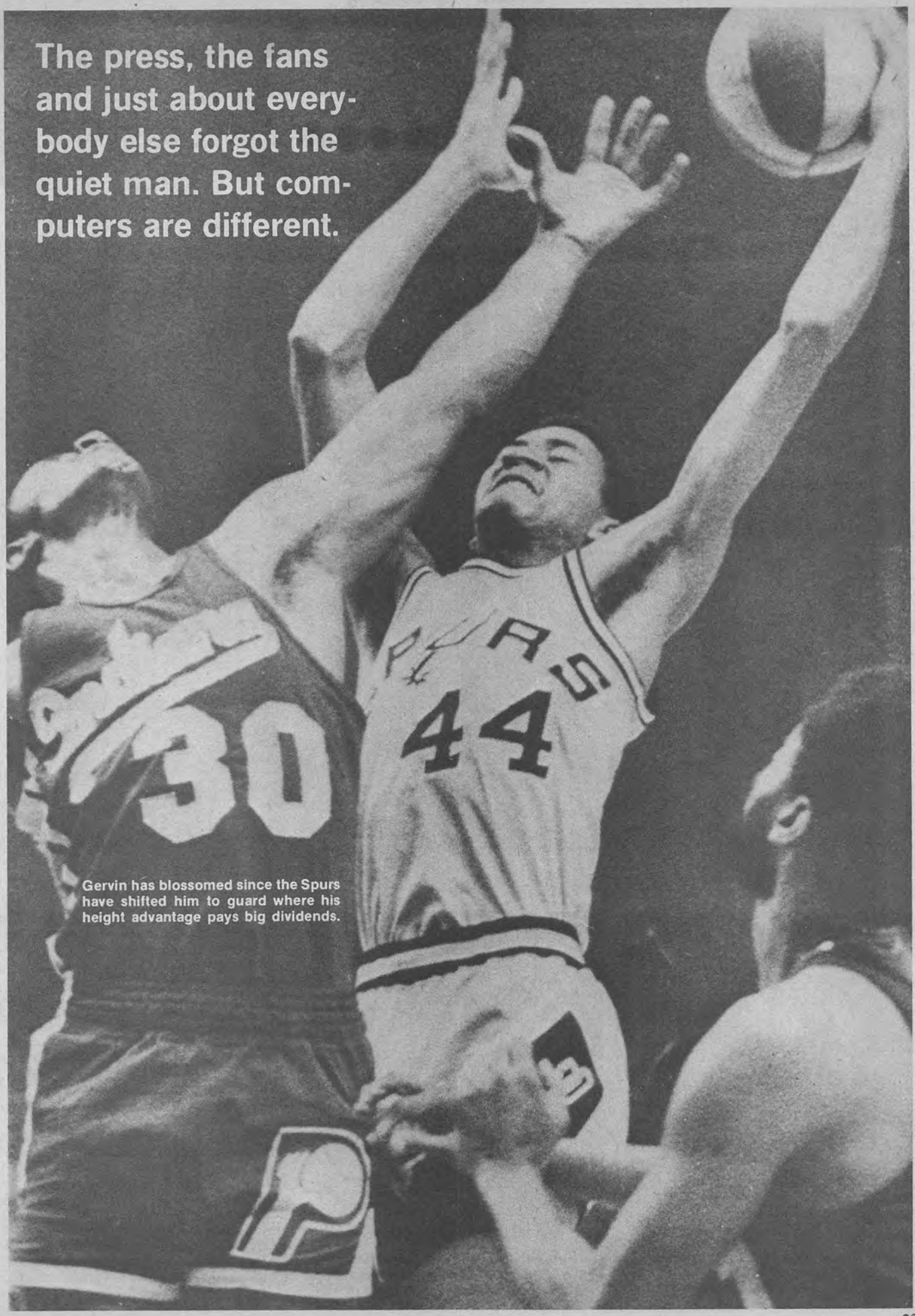
Seventy-Sixer star Julius Erving comments that Gervin doesn't say much. Still the Spurs' quiet man makes waves. "A lot of people are learning about 'Ice'," he says.

With a late surge Gervin managed to beat out David Thompson (33) for theNBA scoring title on the very last day of season.

By BERT ROSENTHAL

There is an annual award of $10,000 given to the "most productive and most consistent" player in pro basketball. The winner is not determined in a popularity contest, because there is no voting, either by the players, the coaches or the media. The results are determined strictly on a computer rating system that analyzes performances in seven major categories—scoring, shooting accuracy, free throw percentage, rebounds, assists, steals and blocked shots—in an effort to define all-around ability.

The players are measured against a "standard of achievement" for their posi-



Gervin has blossomed since the Spurs have shifted him to guard where his height advantage pays big dividends.

Dave Bing of the Celtics once coached Gervin at a Detroit summer camp, says no one in league can guard Spur star one-on-one.

Gus Bailey of Jazz spent harrowing night trying to guard Gervin as the Spurs kept feeding teammate in his scoring title bid.

Gervin easily won top computerized Productive Efficiency Rating over runnerup Paul Westphal of Phoenix by three points.

tion (guard, center, forward) and the player who comes closest to that computer-based level is the winner.

The winner last season was George Gervin of the San Antonio Spurs.

It wasn't Portland's Bill Walton, named officially as the National Basketball Association's Most Valuable Player.

It wasn't Denver's David Thompson, the leading vote-getter on the NBA All-League team.

It wasn't Phoenix' Walter Davis, the NBA's Rookie of the Year.

It wasn't Los Angeles' Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the league's five-time MVP and a certainty for the Pro Basketball Hall of Fame when he retires.

And it wasn't Philadelphia's Julius Erving, the perennial All-Star and All-Pro who is rated by many as the finest all-around player in the game today.

Indeed, it was George Gervin of San Antonio, a quietly, confident, unassuming, 6-foot-8 guard from the league's smallest

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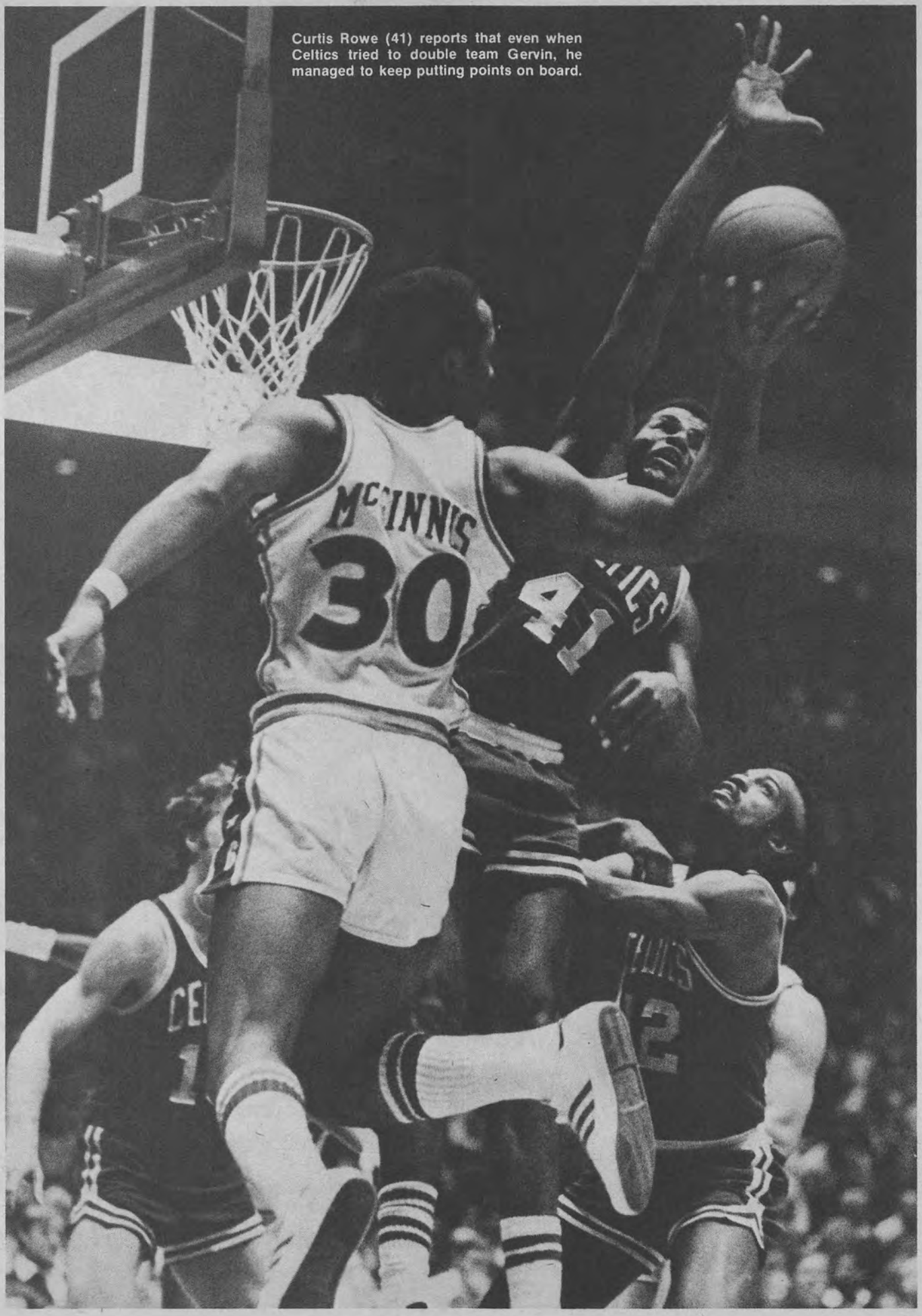
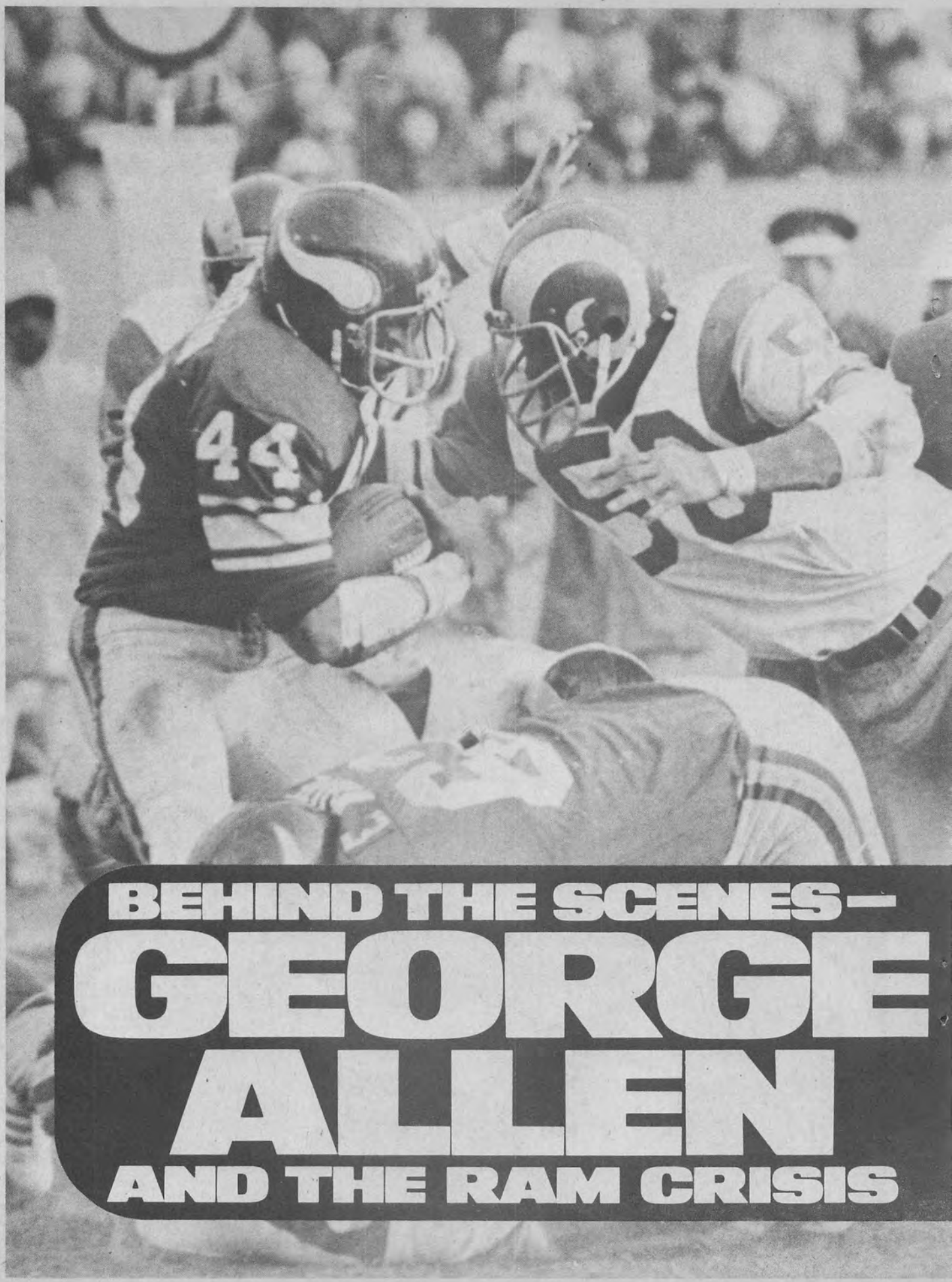


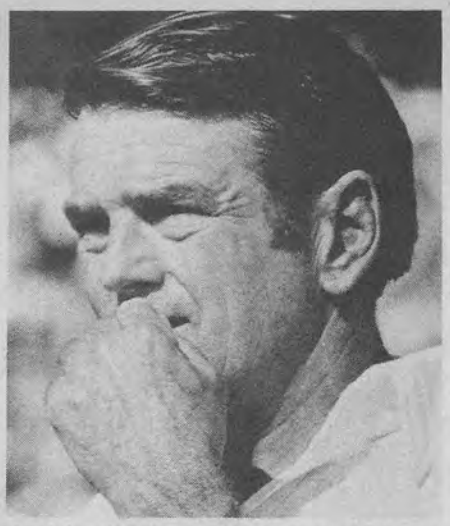
Curtis Rowe (41) reports that even when Celtics tried to double team Gervin, he managed to keep putting points on board.



BEHIND THE SCENES— GEORGE ALLEN AND THE RAM CRISIS

Isiah Robertson (58) has apologized for his initial reaction to return of Allen. But truce is an uneasy one between them.

The "marriage" had to be the shortest in NFL history. It lasted only two exhibition games. Here is the inside story of the forces which were at work to smash football's most publicized "honeymoon".



A defensive specialist, Allen wasn't too likely to add anything new or imaginative to Ram offense which has been called dull.

Pat Haden (11) worried over his role as Ram signal caller. He had complete control under former Ram coach Chuck Knox.

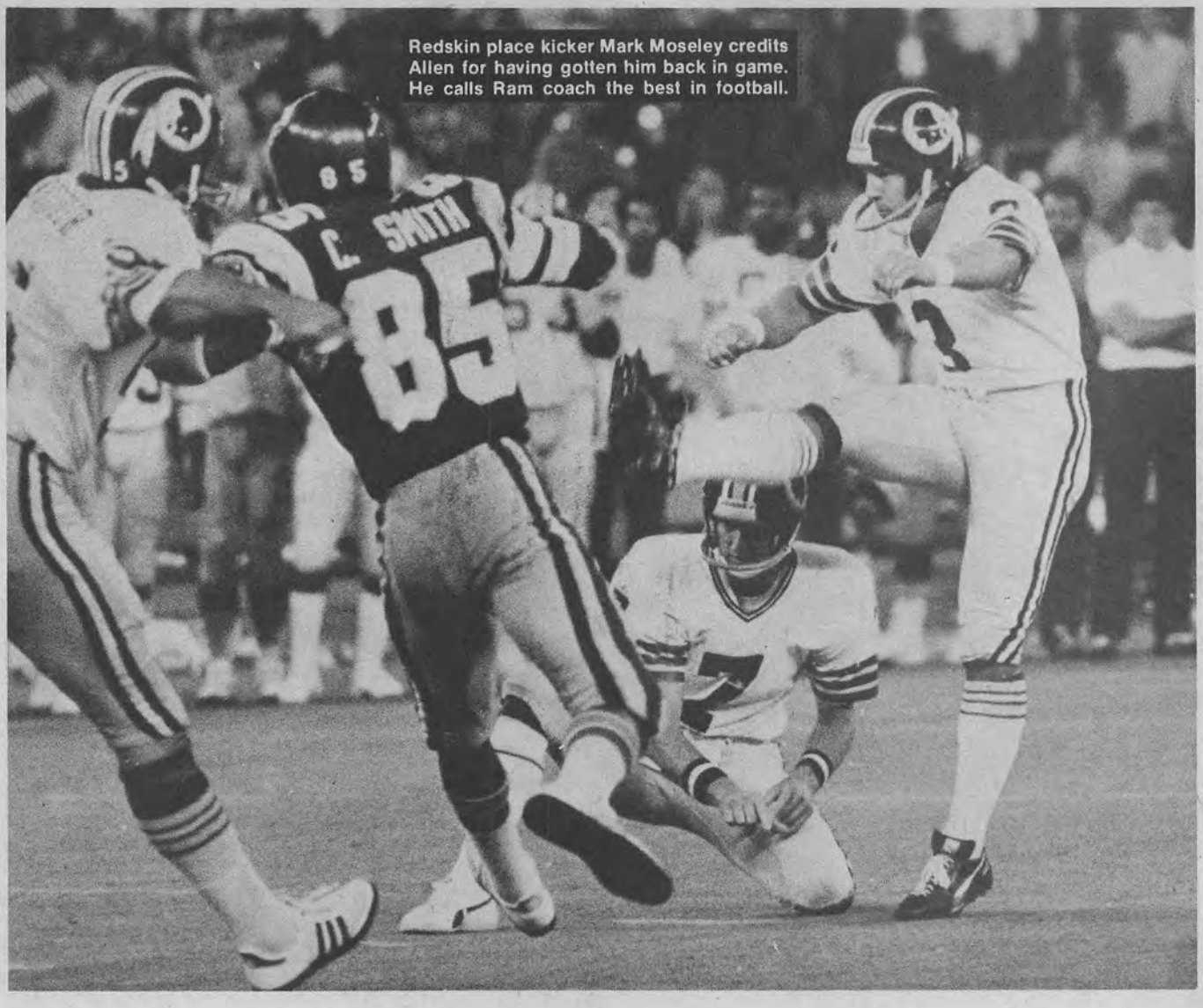
By BART ROSS

George Allen is neither liked nor disliked. To those who know George Allen, he evokes either love or hatred. The feelings are that strong.

For instance, the late Dan Reeves, former owner of the Los Angeles Rams who fired Allen as coach twice, once said of him: "George is as naggy as a wife, as crabby as a boss and wants more power than Hitler."

And on the other side is Diron Talbert, a defensive tackle who spent his first 11 seasons in the National Football League with Allen. "There's nobody around who's better qualified to coach than George. He's got an ability to work with talent like no one else," said Talbert.

Allen is putting that talent to work again for the Rams this season. In one of the most surprising developments during



Redskin place kicker Mark Moseley credits Allen for having gotten him back in game. He calls Ram coach the best in football.

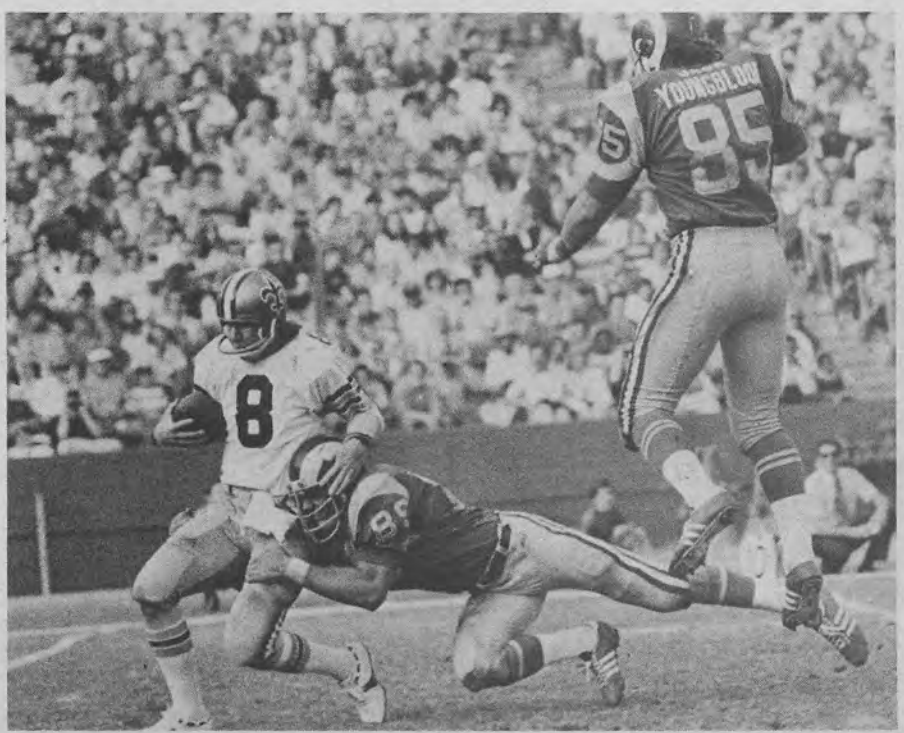
the NFL off-season, the controversial Allen was fired as coach of the Washington Redskins and hired by the Rams. The move set off violent shock waves in both Los Angeles and Washington.

There were those who wouldn't believe what happened when it did, those who still don't believe it and those who will never believe it.

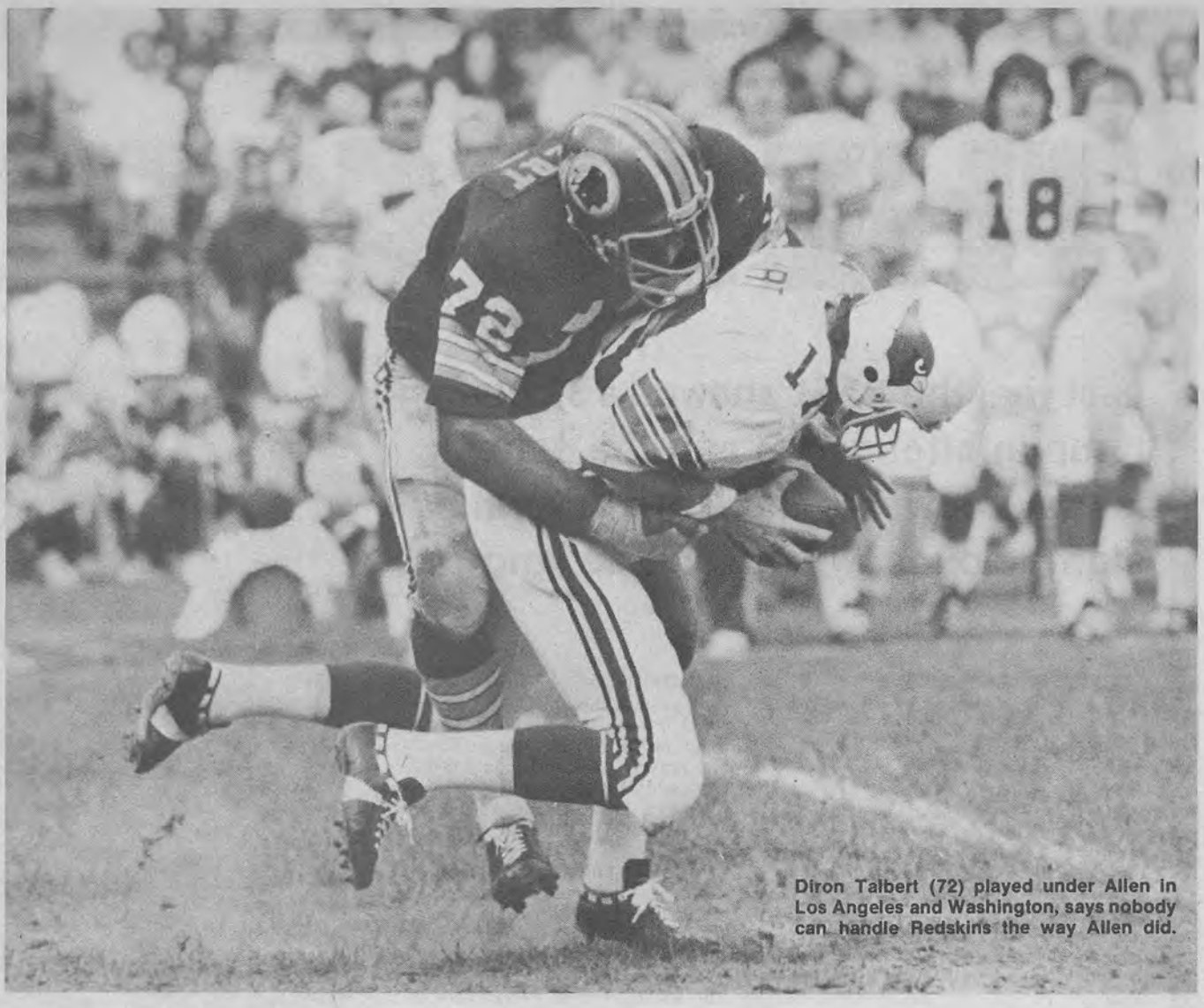
What actually triggered the fireworks was the Rams' dismissal of Coach Chuck Knox. All Knox did in five seasons as coach was lead the Rams to a regular-season record of 54-15-1 and five National Football Conference West Division championships. But the big knock against him, by management, was that he failed to lead the Rams into the cherished land of the Super Bowl.

So Knox, popular with most of the players, was let go, shortly after the Rams were upset by the Minnesota Vikings 14-7 in the opening round of last season's playoffs. In addition to not taking the Rams into the Super Bowl, it was charged that Knox was unable to produce an entertaining and explosive offense. And so Knox shuffled off to Buffalo, where he signed a six-year contract with the Bills.

"If Chuck Knox asked me to go to Buffalo, I'd go as fast as a 747 would get me there,"



Veteran defensive end Fred Dryer (89) is certain that L.A. belongs in Super Bowl.



Diron Talbert (72) played under Allen in Los Angeles and Washington, says nobody can handle Redskins the way Allen did.

said Rams' linebacker Isiah Robertson. "His leaving frightens me. I doubt that another coach can give me the self-confidence and motivation that Knox did."

"Chuck Knox gave me every latitude," said quarterback Pat Haden. "He gave me complete control of the offense. Perhaps I'm the one who should go to Buffalo. Maybe I'm the one who was too conservative."

Another player who regretted seeing Knox leave was safety Bill Simpson. "I don't think there was any question but that some people have wanted more offensive flair," said Simpson. "The thing is, along with that flair, they may get more losses. We won a lot of games under Chuck Knox. I find it hard to argue with success."

"Management obviously feels we're a Super Bowl team," said defensive end Fred Dryer. "So do the players. So does Chuck Knox. No one probably believes it more than he does unless it's me."

At the same time that Knox was completing his fifth year with the Rams, Allen was ending his seventh season with the Redskins. Known as the "Over The Hill Gang" because of Allen's fondness for acquiring old, veteran players instead of trying to build through the draft, the Redskins finished the 1977 season with a

Carroll Rosenbloom (with Allen) will continue to keep a tight hand at helm, causing potential frictions with field boss.

9-5 record, missing the NFC wild card playoff berth in a point differential tiebreaker with the Chicago Bears.

Nevertheless, Allen's Washington teams had compiled a 67-30-1 mark, the best in the club's history, and had made the playoffs five times, including 1972, when they won the NFL championship before losing to the Miami Dolphins 14-7 in the Super Bowl.

But Allen's artistically successful reign as Washington's coach and general manager was about to come to an end. Club President Edward Bennett Williams did not wait long after the season before firing Allen.

"I just reached the point where I couldn't wait any longer for George to make up his mind and have so advised him of our decision to look for a new head coach and general manager," said Williams. "Our negotiations with George Allen are concluded."

Williams was referring to contract negotiations begun July 14, 1977. On that day, Williams called a news conference to announce that Allen and the Redskins had agreed upon a new four-year contract. But Allen never signed the contract, which called for $250,000 per year.

Williams explained that he had waited

(Continued on page 64)

THE SOCCER

Last year the NASL showed a 31 percent jump in attendance and the outlook is rosy. However there are several storm clouds which can't be ignored.

By Dick Joyce

My kid brother and I used to get a lot of laughs whenever our uncle, Joe Murphy, joined us in a game of catch outside our house in Brooklyn. While we used our bare hands or baseball gloves to catch the rubber ball, Uncle Joe had a unique style. We'd throw the ball to him and he'd block it with his right foot, dribble, it then kick it back to us with amazing accuracy.

"Hey, Uncle Joe," I'd say. "You're supposed to catch the ball with your hands, not kick it." Shaking his head, Joe replied through his thick Irish brogue: "I'm an old soccer player...no hands...just feet."

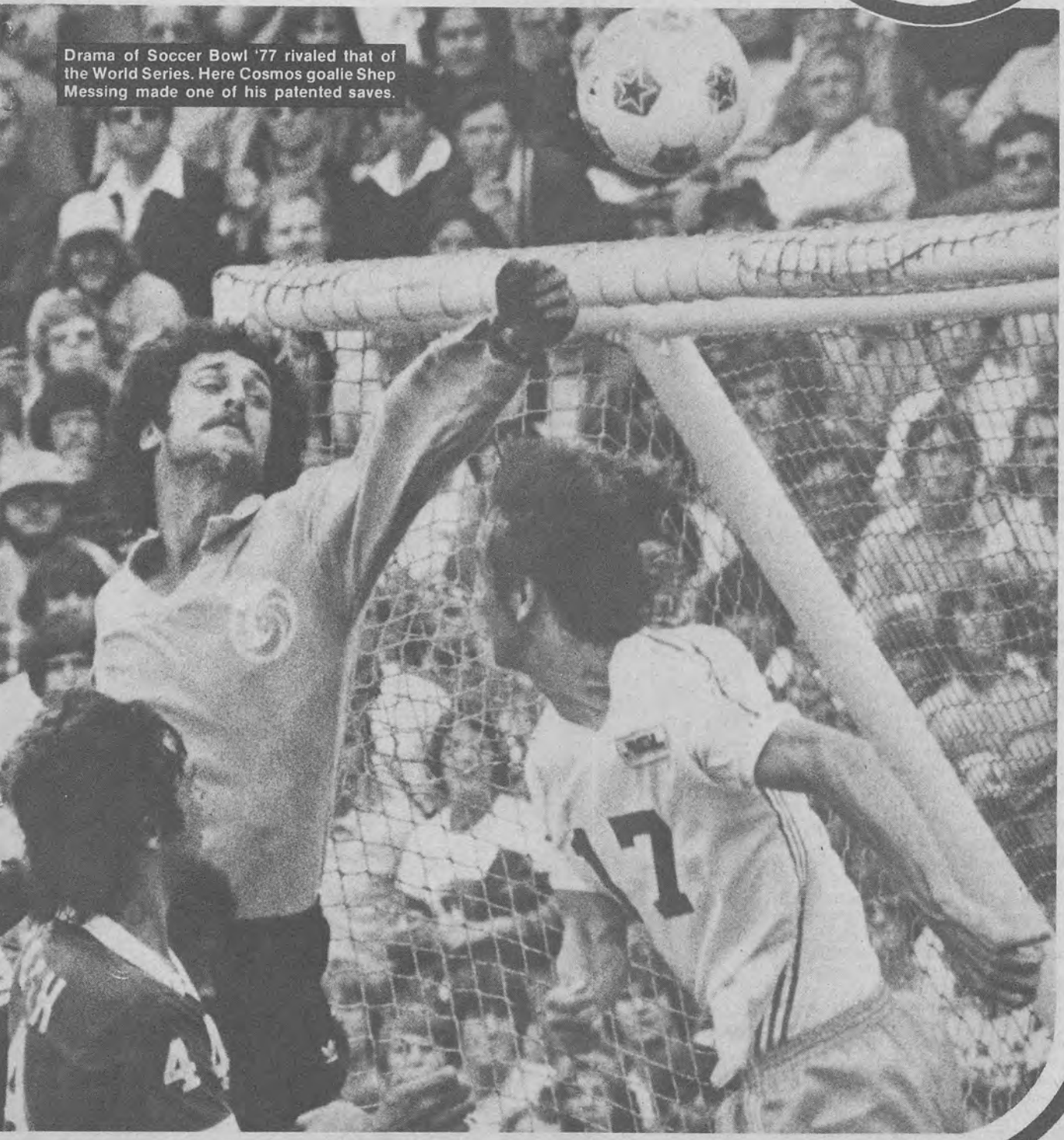
We couldn't understand why he never wanted to use his hands. And soccer, who ever heard of it? Of course, that was 30 years ago.

Now I roll a ball across the living room floor to my 3-year-old son and the first thing he does is kick it. He kicks it again and again. He doesn't throw it; he kicks it. It's the natural reaction for any youngster. No wonder soccer is the most popular sport in the world. Almost everywhere in the

Over 76,000 fans braved a steady downpour to pay tribute to Pele as the charismatic superstar made his farewell appearance at an exhibition match in the Giants Stadium.

BOOM-

CAN IT LAST?



Drama of Soccer Bowl '77 rivaled that of the World Series. Here Cosmos goalie Shep Messing made one of his patented saves.

Soccer is lone sport in United States in which intense interest is filtering from youngsters to adults since kids love of game comes from own schoolyard experience.

world it's the No. 1 sport—except in the United States.

However, unless you've been living in a cave for the past year, you're aware that soccer made giant inroads in 1977 on the American sports scene. Since the English invented soccer—or association football as it's known abroad—other nations were quick to adopt it. The Europeans, Latin Americans, Asians and Africans all played it.

But Americans, both as participants and spectators, chose to ignore it. Instead they used some of the principles of soccer to devise their own game—American football. It evolved from a game played by collegians to the professional level where hulking behometh battered themselves each weekend.

Reaching its peak in the mid-1960s and early '70s, thanks to the glut of television exposure, pro football was even believed by many observers to have surpassed the good old American baseball as the national pastime. Meantime, soccer has rocketed from the bottom of the heap in the United States to become a possible threat to pro football in the United States.

No way, you say? Listen to Phil Woosnam, president of the North American Soccer League:

"I see the North American Soccer League as the top professional soccer league in the world and the top professional sports league in the world. I also see soccer as the No. 1 sport in the country. I see this starting to take place already and in as little as five years, I believe we will have reached that goal."

These grandiose words could be easily dismissed as a lot of hoopla, if it wasn't for evidence that a soccer craze is sweeping the country. There's no doubt that soccer is here to stay.

A tip of the hat goes to Pele, soccer's all-time player for help making it happen. In ceremonies before Pele's last game on October 1, 1977 at Giants Stadium in the Meadowlands complex in New Jersey, a plaque from President Carter was read to the capacity crowd of 78,000:

"Presented to Pele for the smiles he put on children's faces, the thrills he gave to fans across the country and the new dimension he added to American sports. Whereas Pele has elevated the game of soccer to heights never before attained in America and whereas only Pele, with his status, incomparable talent and beloved compassion, could have accomplished such a mission, the United States of America is deeply grateful."

Who would have believed it? Who would have fathomed that Pele's team, the Cosmos of the North American Soccer League, would have drawn in excess of 70,000 fans on several occasions in the new superstructure in the Jersey swamplands. On one occasion in 1977 the Cosmos drew 60,000 fans while New York's baseball clubs—the Yankees and the Mets—each drew less than 16,000 in a rare occurrence when both were home at the same time.

Phil Woosnam, NASL Commissioner, has set a five year goal for making soccer America's top sport. Some laugh off his prediction, but the craze is still growing.

Fact that soccer is not contact sport allows girls to play. Experts say this guarantees future intest by women in the professional loops.

Okay, so the Mets had unloaded a hero in trading away Tom Seaver and were going nowhere, but the Yankees were battling for the pennant.

How do you figure it, this foreign sport which is played without using the hands (except by goalkeepers)?

"Give it 10 years to make it," many observers said in June 1975 after the Cosmos wooed the 34-year-old Pele, a longtime star in Brazil, for a contract estimated at $4 million for three years, the largest contract in sports history. But there were plenty of dissenters. "I wouldn't walk across the street to see a soccer game," they said, "much less Randalls Island." But the Cosmos, who bounced around from Randalls Island, Yankee Stadium and Hofstra University as their home field, gradually improved their following, thanks to Pele. When the Cosmos moved into Giants Stadium in 1977 the soccer fans turned out in hordes to see Pele and such other high-paid Cosmo stars as Franz Beckenbauer, Giorgio Chinaglia and Carlos Alberto.

Although the skills of Pele, who turned 36 in 1977, had diminished, the general public in the United States wasn't aware of it because of lack of expert knowledge. That's unlike other sports when New Yorkers were well aware that such superstars as Joe Namath, Mickey Mantle and Walt Frazier were slipping.

But the Cosmos won it all in 1977-the NASL championship—beating Seattle in the finale, a fitting retirment present for Pele. The Cosmos led the 18-team league in attendance with an average of 34,142 for 13 home dates. Minnesota ranked second

(Continued on page 60)

THE SUPERSONIC MAGIC - HOW IT WORKS

Decision to give starting assignment to Dennis Johnson (24) shored up back court for Sonics. He teams with Gus Williams.

Marvin Webster has proved he can go the distance and can maintain a blistering pace for 35 minutes a game.

Coach Lenny Wilkens doesn't kick chairs around. His low key manner has been Seattle morale aid.

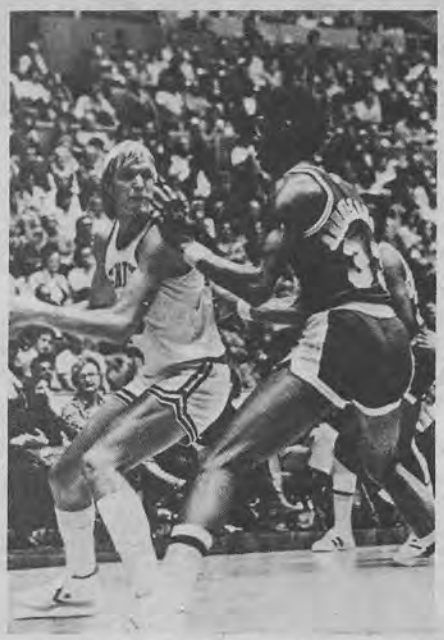
"Our confidence was gone. They said we were the worst in the league. I wanted our players to believe in themselves." To accomplish his purpose Lenny Wilkens set a new standard for coaching.

By RICHARD JAYSON

When Lenny Wilkens took over as coach of the Seattle SuperSonics last Nov. 30, the club had a 5-17 record which put it in last place in the NBA's Pacific Division and apparently was headed for the bottom of Puget Sound. Wilkens, who had been hired earlier last year as personnel director of the Sonics, took the coach's job only with the stipulation that he could return to the front office if things didn't work out. Evaluating the situation, Wilkens said, "No question it will be tough. But I think we can salvage something . . . I believe I can change the mental attitude of this team. Anything's possible."

What happened was that Wilkens turned the Sonics into a winner, guiding them into the NBA championship final where they battled down to the seventh and final

Lenny Wilkens (19) was one of most popular Sonics ever as a player. His handling of coaching duties has added new glory.



Jack Simka has produced far beyond fondest Sonic expectations. He is in second year as pro, should become even better.

game before losing to the Washington Bullets. How Wilkens turned around this club is a remarkable tale. And for his reward this product of Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant and Providence College received a fat, five-year contract in which he will coach and serve as personnel director for three years and work in an "executive position" the next two.

Looking back, Wilkens' wife Marilyn said, "When Lenny said he was going back to coaching I thought he had lost his mind. I didn't think he should touch the job with a 10-foot pole." After all, Wilkens had been fired before as Seattle coach and also was canned at Portland.

Wilkens, who had been an outstanding playmaker and scorer in the NBA at St. Louis, Cleveland and Seattle, was out of basketball for a year but kept in touch by serving as a TV color commentator for NBA games and for the Seattle University games.

Mrs. Wilkens remembered, "When he became the Sonics' director of player personnel, I thought that would be fine, that it would be a relaxed-type job. Then he went back into coaching. All the time I was thinking he should see a psychiatrist, but he convinced me to wait and see."

Wilkens had been the Sonics' player-coach from 1969 to 1972 and, with the help of Spencer Haywood, turned them from a loser into a winning team in '72 with a 47-35 record. But owner Sam Schulman wanted Wilkens to relinquish his coaching duties and continue as a player. Wilkens was 34 and wanting to remain in Seattle, he agreed to resign as coach. However, he then thought he would be placing a burden on new coach Tom Nissalke, so Wilkens asked out. He was traded to Cleveland in the summer of 1972 for Butch Beard. The following day, Seattle police received a bomb threat directed at the Sonics' office.

In explaining why he felt Wilkens couldn't handle the dual role, Schulman said: "When Lenny was player-coach, he wouldn't look at video taped games. He didn't believe in it. He was so engrossed in his playing that he did it at the expense of his coaching. But over the years he has matured tremendously. It's an interesting study of people to watch the transition of Lenny from when I knew him as a player to today."

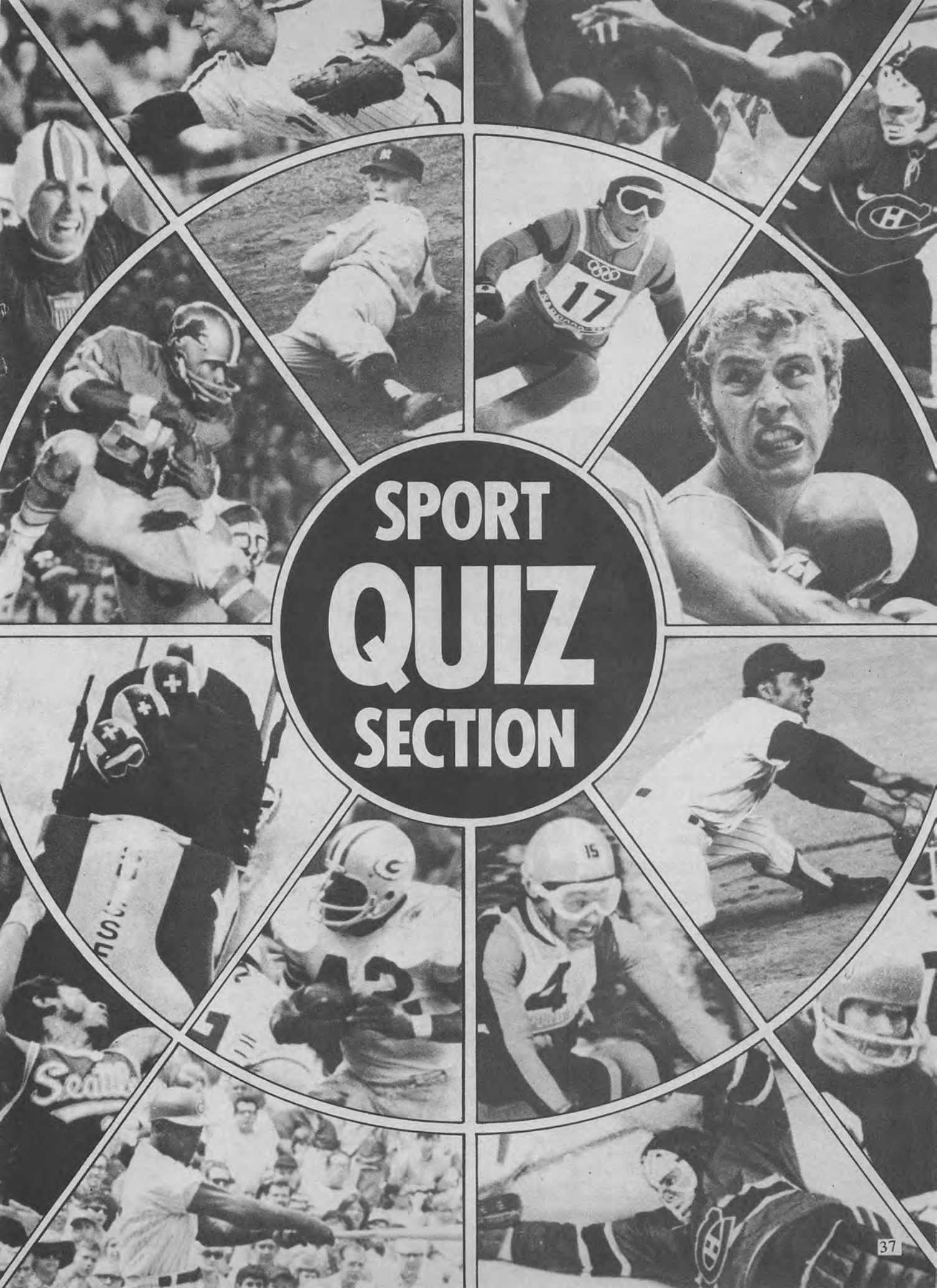
Schulman, whose club entered the NBA as an expansion team for the 1967-68 season, suffered through 10 tough campaigns before Wilkens turned things around last season. Schulman poured millions of dollars into the franchise for players like Haywood, Jim McDaniels and John Brisker, but without success.

Bill Russell, the former Boston Celtic great and coach, took over at Seattle as general manager and coach in 1973-74. The Sonics reached respectability under Russell but got no farther. It wasn't enough to keep the 68-year-old Schulman happy, so he bought out the final year of Russell's contract. The coaching reins were turned over to Bob Hopkins, Russell's assistant and his cousin. Hopkins didn't receive much security, only a one-year contract. The crushing blow for Hopkins came when the Sonics lost 99-96 at home to the New Jersey Nets on Nov. 27. Only the Nets had a worse record in the 22-team NBA.

Hopkins, by this time, was desperate and took out the losses on the players. A few days later Hopkins was fired. Under Wilkens the Sonics went on a 22-5 splurge which put them in third place in the Pacific Division and carried them into the thick of the race.

"When I took over," Wilkens said, "The

(Continued on Page 71)


SPORT
QUIZ
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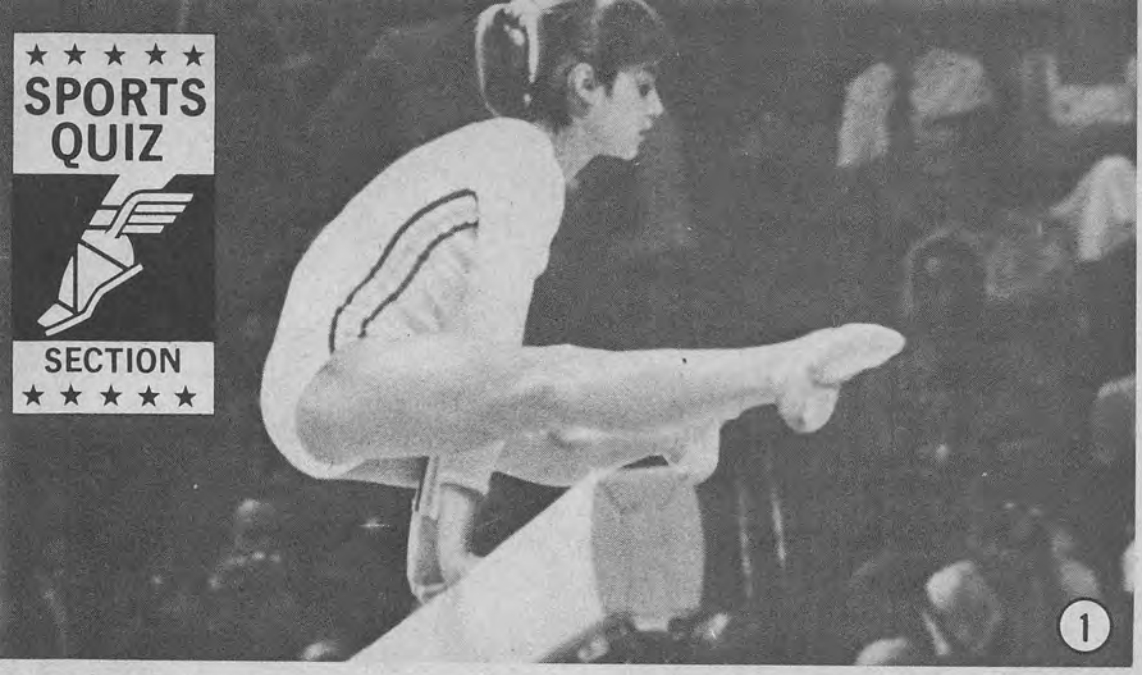
SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

MEMORABLE



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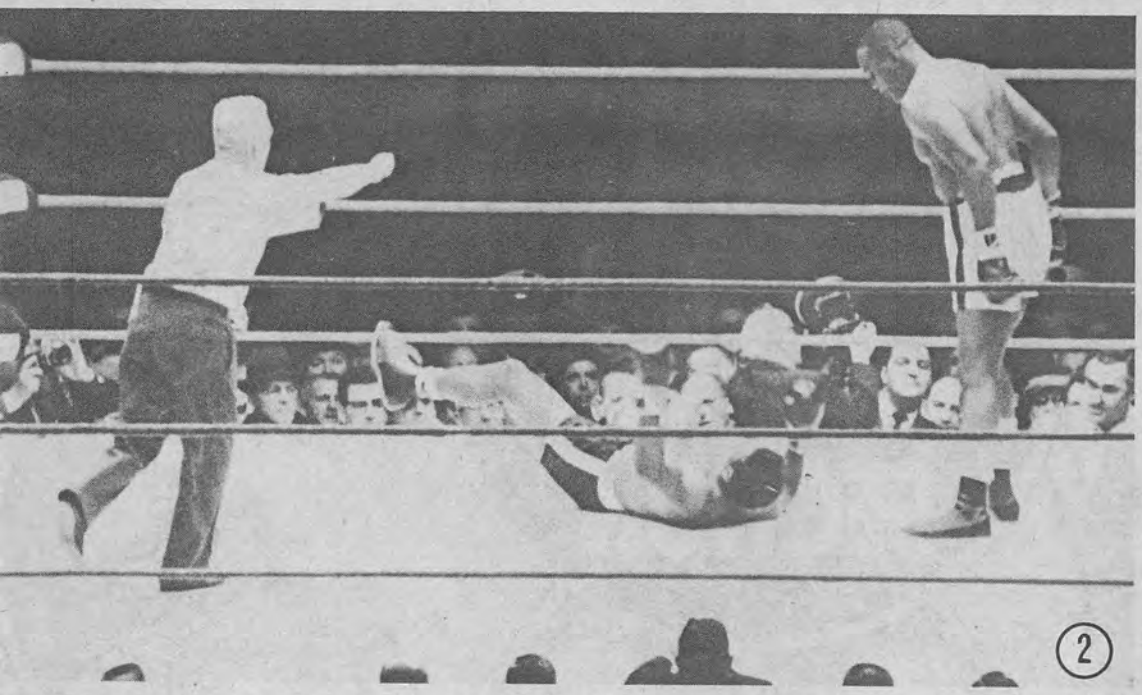

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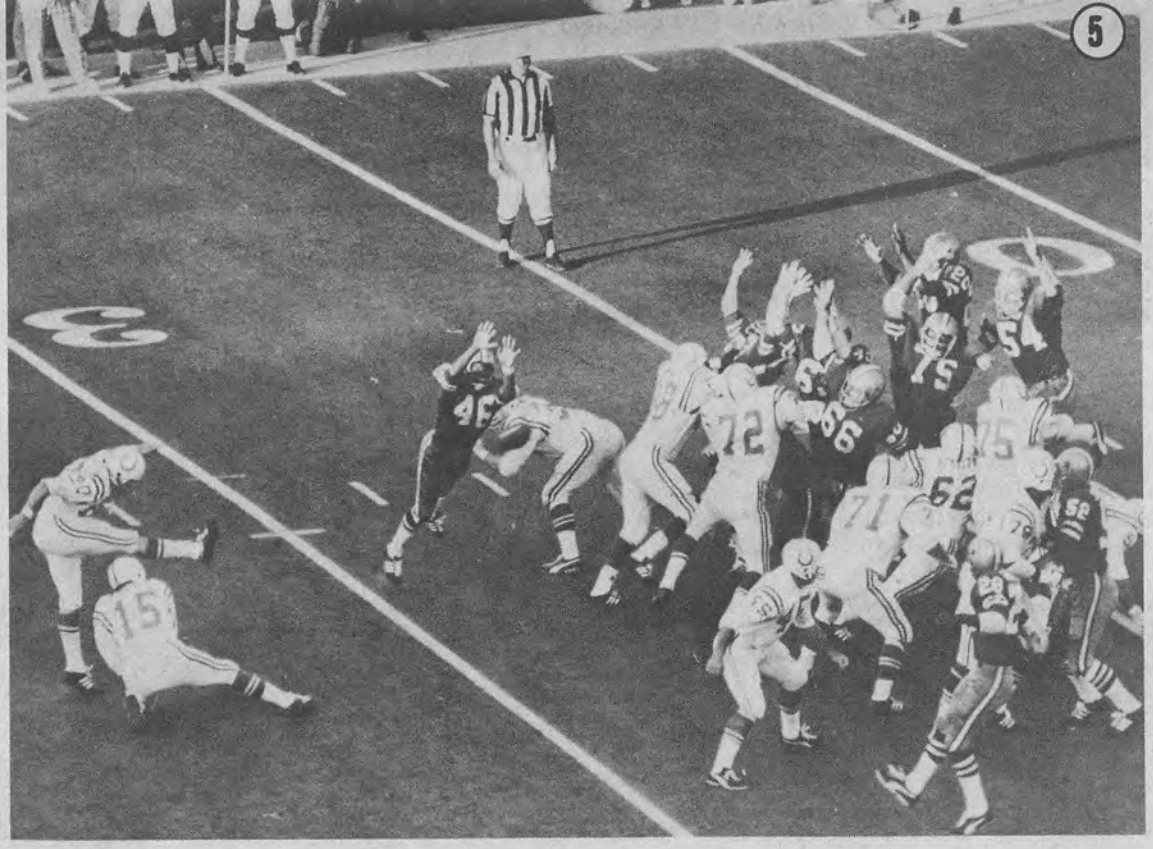
IN SPORT MOMENTS



2 +4/5

Some sports events are talked about for years. Here are five memorable events that sportcasters and other sport fans won't easily forget. As a clue, the year in which the events took place is listed. Three out of five is good, four earns you a superior rating and five makes you a sports genius.

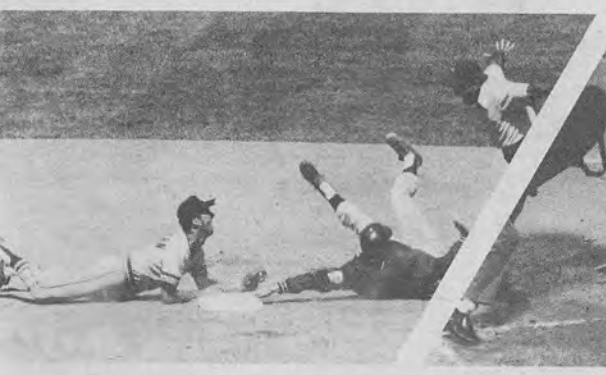
1. **1976** Nadia comm. scores 10 in olympics
2. **1962** Patterson retains Title
3. **1977** Pele's last game
4. **1965** Sandy Koufax no hitter
5. **1971** Bart Starr Bowl in Super Bowl Jim Bakken kicks field goal

SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

Baseball match-up

Oct 30, 1978 Joey Eaton

Old-time baseball fans had things a lot easier than the fan of today. There were no such things as free agents and players were not traded as frequently as they are currently. Each of the players on this page changed uniforms since the end of the 1977 campaign. Placing nine with the team they joined means you're keeping up with the changing times. Ten correct is good, 11 makes you an above average performer and 12 or 13 qualifies you to manage a championship team.



11/13 3

San Francisco	1. Vida Blue	A. Philadelphia
new york Yankees	2. Andy Messersmith	B. Texas
Chicago cubs	3. Dave Kingman	C. New York Yankees
Texas	4. Richie Zisk	D. Boston
milwaukee	5. Larry Hisle	E. San Franciso
Boston	6. Mike Torrez	F. Toronto
San Diego	7. Gaylord Perry	G. Chicago Cubs
Philadelphia	8. Bud Harrelson	H. California
Kansas City	9. Al Hrabosky	I. Detroit
california	10. Lyman Bostock	J. Milwaukee
Pittsburgh	11. John Milner	K. Kansas City
Detroit	12. Rico Carty	L. San Diego
Toronto	13. Jim Slaton	M. Pittsburgh

Athletes often pick up a nickname that fans easily associate with his name. Think of Julius Erving and Dr. J pops into your mind. Another example was John (Hondo) Havlicek, who retired at the end of the 1977-78 National Basketball Association season.

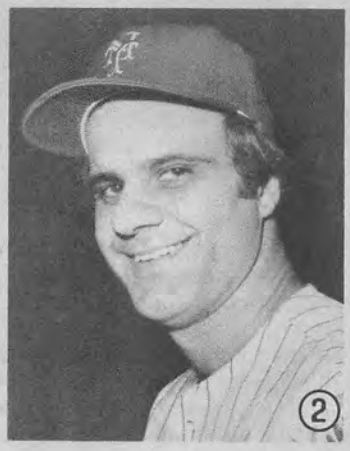
Here are 15 other athletes that have gained a nickname. Your job, should you accept it, is to match the nickname in the left hand column with the star's name on the right. Identify less than 13 and you need to read the sports section a little closer. Fourteen correct is excellent and a perfect score is outstanding.

MATCH THE NICKNAME TO THE SPORTS STAR

1.	Dr. Dunk	a.	Pete Rose
2.	Human Eraser	b.	Willie Mays
3.	The Hammer	c.	Earl Monroe
4.	Too Tall	d.	Ed Jones
5.	Country	e.	Darryl Dawkins
6.	Doc	f.	Al Hrabosky
7.	Stretch	g.	Greg Luzinski
8.	Say Hay	h.	Marvin Johnson
9.	Bull	i.	Walt Frazier
10.	Magic	j.	Enos Slaughter
11.	Charlie Hustle	k.	Dave Schultz
12.	The Pearl	l.	George Medich
13.	Clyde	m.	John Montefusco
14.	Mad Hungarian	n.	Willie McCovey
15.	The Count	o.	Marvin Barnes

SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

1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6

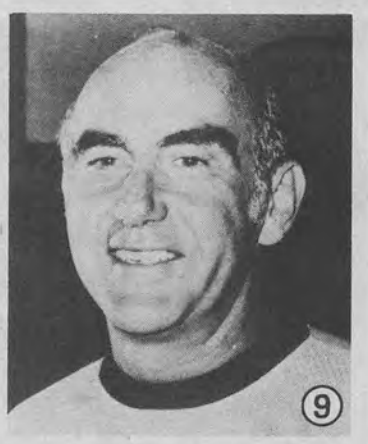
Success is usually the best formula to insure being rehired as a coach or manager. However, everyone who takes the job is aware there's a lack of security in the position. In fact, it has often been said that coaches and managers are hired to be fired. Here's 12 men who are holding or have held the job of heading a pro team. You reach first base if you identify 10. Eleven gets you to second base, but 12 means you've hit a grand slam homer. If you only get seven or less, it's back to the minors or even worse.

NAME THE desperate dozen

1. Tom Landry
2. .....
3. .....
4. .....
5. .....
6. Sparky Anderson
7. George Steinbrenner
8. Walt Alston
9. .....
10. John Madden
11. Billy Martin
12. .....

7

8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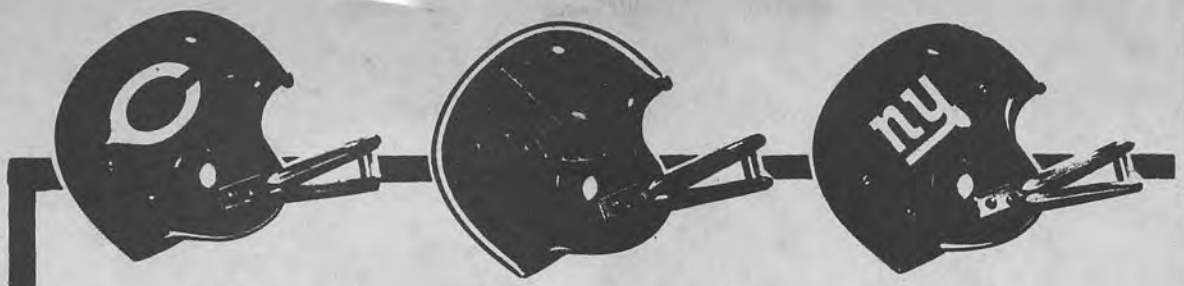
10

11

12

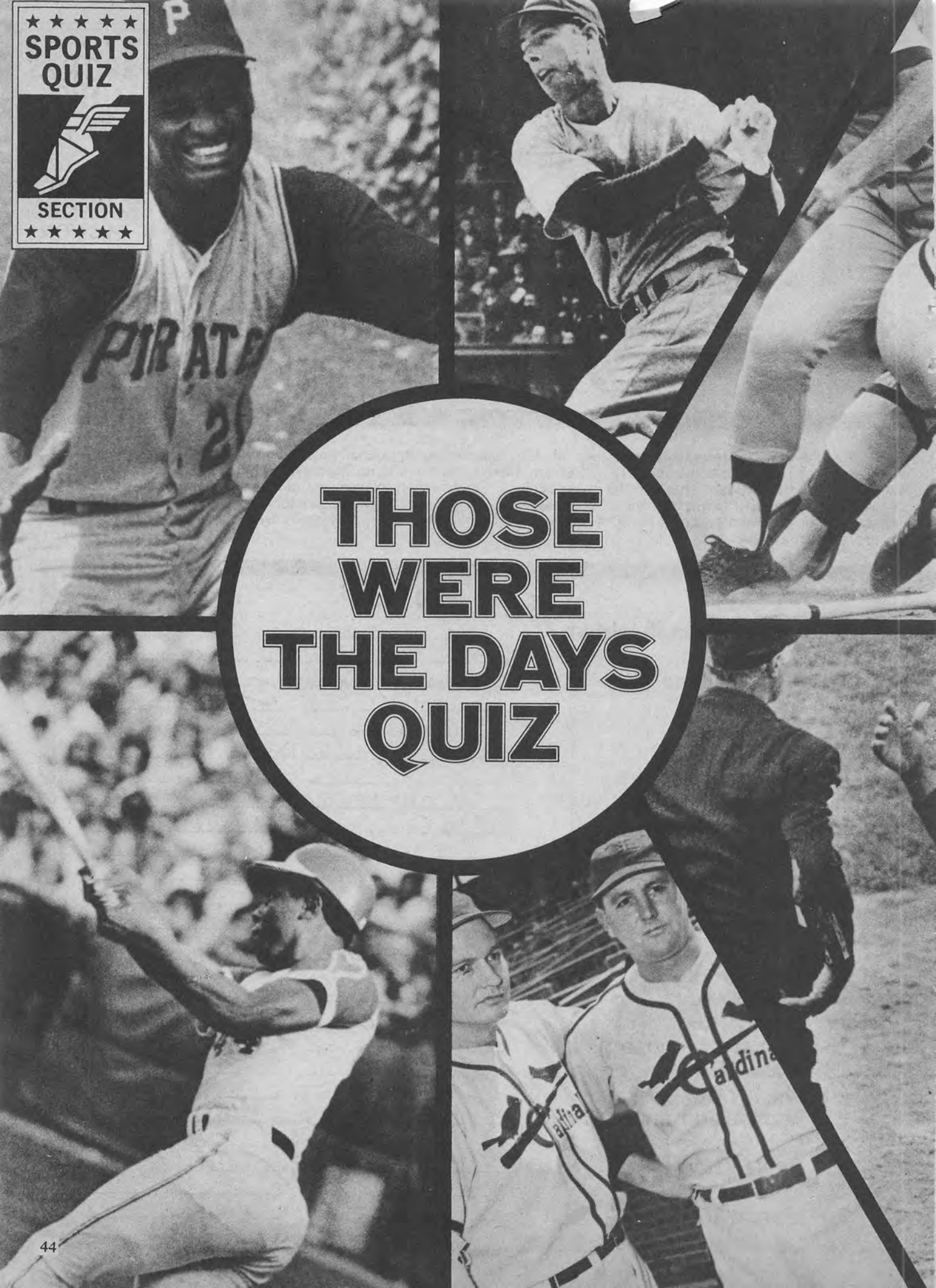


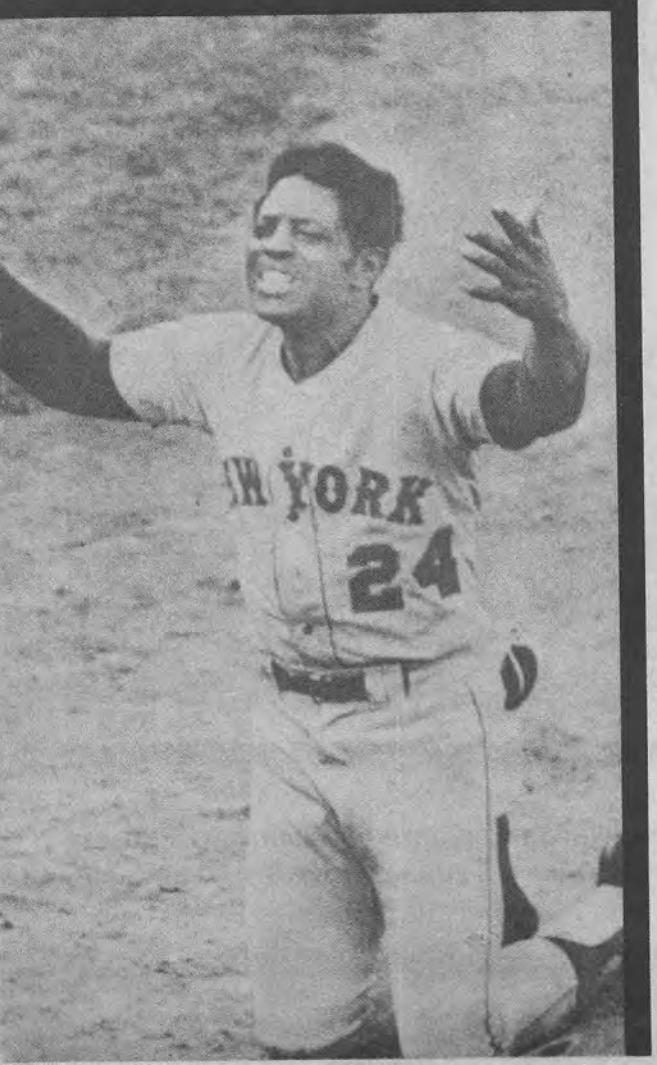
SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

home coming day quiz

When the National Basketball Association and the old American Basketball Association were battling, players often left their old teams for one in the rival league. But now, there's only one league. Still players get traded or become free agents. The one thing that doesn't change is the player's college. See how many players you can put together with the pro team they were with at the end of last season and the college they attended. Score two points for each correct pro team and each correct college. You pass with a score of 70, 80 is good and 90 is excellent. (Hint—no college is used more than once and only three pro teams are duplicated.)

		PRO TEAM	COLLEGE
1.	Kareem Abdul-Jabbar	Los Angeles	UCLA
2.	Kent Benson	Chicago	Indiana
3.	Alvan Adams	Phoenix	Duke
4.	Dan Issel	Denver	Duke
5.	Jack Sikma	Seattle	USC
6.	Dave Cowens	Boston	UCLA
7.	Bobby Dandridge	Milwaukee	Mississippi
8.	Doug Collins	Philadelphia	Arizona
9.	James Edwards	New Jersey	Alabama
10.	Bernard King	Detroit	Missouri
11.	George Gervin	San Antonio	
12.	Bob McAdoo	Buffalo	
13.	Calvin Murphy	Portland	
14.	Bob Lanier	Detroit	
15.	Randy Smith	Buffalo	
16.	Jim Chones	Cleveland	
17.	John Drew	Chicago	
18.	Leonard Robinson	Milwaukee	
19.	Mark Landsberger	Buffalo	
20.	Wesley Cox		
21.	Scott Wedman	Kansas City	
22.	Bob Gross	Portland	
23.	David Thompson	Denver	North Carolina
24.	Paul Westphal	Phoenix	
25.	Marvin Webster	Seattle	


SPORTS QUIZ
SECTION
THOSE WERE THE DAYS QUIZ



Trivia questions receive plenty of attention from sports fans of all ages. Here's a test to see how much baseball trivia is a part of your memory. You get two points for each correct answer. A score of 100 is perfect and if you score less than 70 it's time for more study.

1. Name four American League teams that Billy Martin managed.
2. What team was Babe Ruth with when he retired as a player?
3. Seven players have hit four home runs in a nine-inning game. Name them.
4. Who was the American League's Most Valuable Player in 1977?
5. Name the team that the following players were with for their major league debut. (Note: You must have the right city and nickname.)
   a. Manny Mota _____
   b. Hank Aaron _____
   c. Chris Chambliss _____
   d. Bill Madlock _____
   e. Dave Kingman
   f. Joe Morgan _____
   g. Ken Singleton _____
   h. Jeff Burroughs _____
   i. Steve Carlton _____
   j. Bill Buckner _____
6. Circle the right answer:
   a. The No. 2 man in career stolen bases is:
      1. Maury Wills 2. Ty Cobb
      3. Bert Campaneris 4. Jackie Robinson
   b. Who had the National League's lowest ERA last year?
      1. Tom Seaver 2. Steve Carlton
      3. John Candelaria 4. Tommy John
   c. The Minnesota Twins moved from:
      1. Atlanta 2. Washington
      3. St. Louis 4. Boston
   d. The losing team in the first two AL championship playoffs was:
      1. Minnesota 2. Boston
      3. New York 4. Oakland
   e. What player has won the most batting championships?
      1. Rod Carew 2. Stan Musial
      3. Ty Cobb 4. Honus Wagner
7. Who holds the record for the most hits in a season?
8. Name the losing team in the first NL championship playoff?
9. Lou Brock became baseball's top base stealer in a game against what team?
10. Only four NL teams won league championships since the current playoff system began in 1969 through 1977. Name them.
11. Match the year with the event:

1. 1956	a. Nolan Ryan sets strikeout record
2. 1974	b. Don Drysdale's 6 consecutive shutouts
3. 1973	c. Lou Brock steals 118 bases
4. 1970	d. Tom Seaver strikes out 10 consecutive batters
5. 1968	e. Last subway series

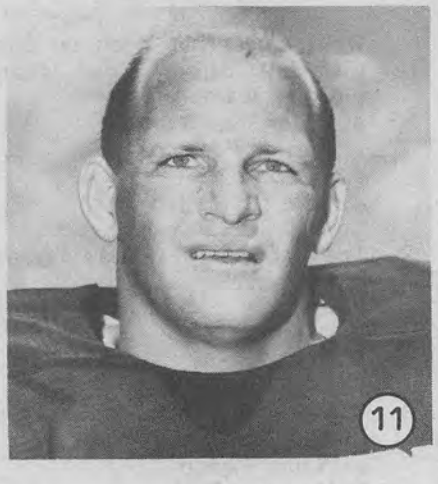
12. Name the four pitchers who have thrown two no-hitters in the same season.
13. Name six players who have batted over .400 since 1920.

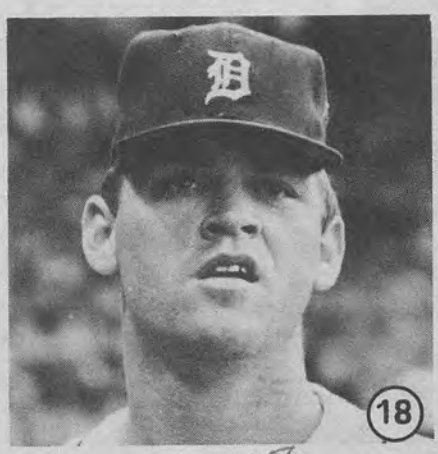
SUPERSTARS

★ ★ ★ ★ ★
SPORTS QUIZ
SECTION
★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Each of the athletes pictured above were considered outstanding during their careers and were recognized as superstars. If you can identify 15 of the 18 correctly you have a sharp eye.

OF THE PAST QUIZ

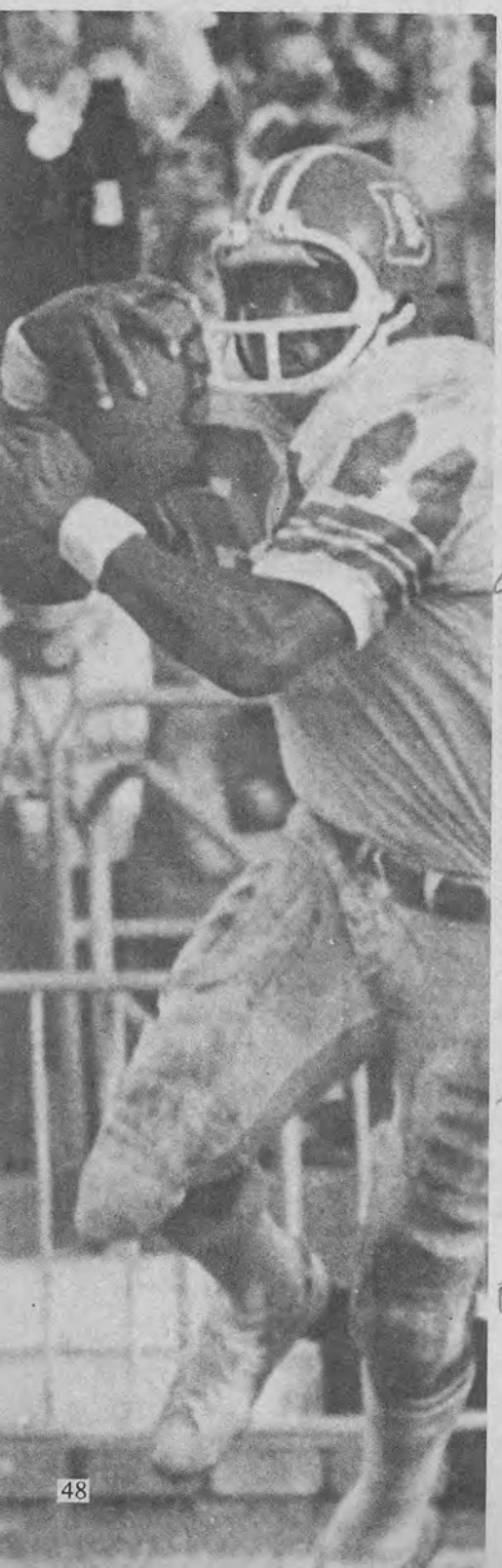




1. .....
2. .....
3. .....
4. Sammy Baugh
5. Bill Russell
6. .....
7. Craig Morrow
8. Babe .....
9. Mickey Mantle
10. .....
11. Sammy Baugh
12. .....
13. .....
14. Jim Brown
15. Wilmer Rabbit
16. Billy Wilmer
17. Hank Aaron
18. .....

47

FOOT



Having the correct answer to 15 of these questions puts you on the team. Sixteen right makes you a starter and 17 gives you superstar status. Answer 18 or more and you should find an agent to get a big contract.

1. What player has been on three different Super Bowl championship teams?
   a. Roger Staubach
   b. Preston Pearson
   c. Len Dawson
   d. Garo Yepremian

2. The first Super Bowl was played in
   a. Los Angeles
   b. Miami
   c. Green Bay
   d. New Orleans

3. The American Football Conference rushing leader last season was
   a. Walter Payton
   b. Mark van Eeghen
   c. Franco Harris
   d. O. J. Simpson

4. The NFL's passing leader in 1977 was:
   a. Pat Haden
   b. Ken Stabler
   c. Roger Staubach
   d. Bob Griese

5. How many different teams have scored victories in the 12 Super Bowls?
   a. five
   b. six
   c. seven
   d. eight

6. Who led the NFL in scoring last season?
   a. Walter Payton
   b. Tony Dorsett
   c. Errol Mann
   d. Efren Herrera

7. How many different teams have played in the 12 Super Bowls?
   a. 14
   b. 12
   c. 11
   d. 18

8. Who gained the most yards on pass receptions in 1977?
   a. Lydell Mitchell
   b. Nat Moore
   c. Dave Casper
   d. Drew Pearson

9. Which team allowed the fewest points in 1977?
   a. Dallas
   b. Atlanta
   c. Washington
   d. Denver

10. Which team scored the most points in 1977?
    a. Oakland
    b. Dallas
    c. Chicago
    d. Miami

11. Which team did not make the football playoffs last season?
    a. Chicago
    b. Baltimore
    c. Miami
    d. Los Angeles

12. What team became noted for its "no name" defense?
    a. Miami
    b. Minnesota
    c. Denver
    d. Washington

BALL

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUIZ

13. The last team to win its first Super Bowl appearance was:
    a. New York Jets
    b. Dallas
    c. Oakland
    d. Pittsburgh

14. The first quarterback to pass for 3,000 yards in a season was:
    a. Joe Namath
    b. Jack Kemp
    c. Fran Tarkenton
    d. George Blanda

15. Jimmy Brown was a college star at:
    a. Syracuse
    b. Notre Dame
    c. Kansas
    d. Oklahoma

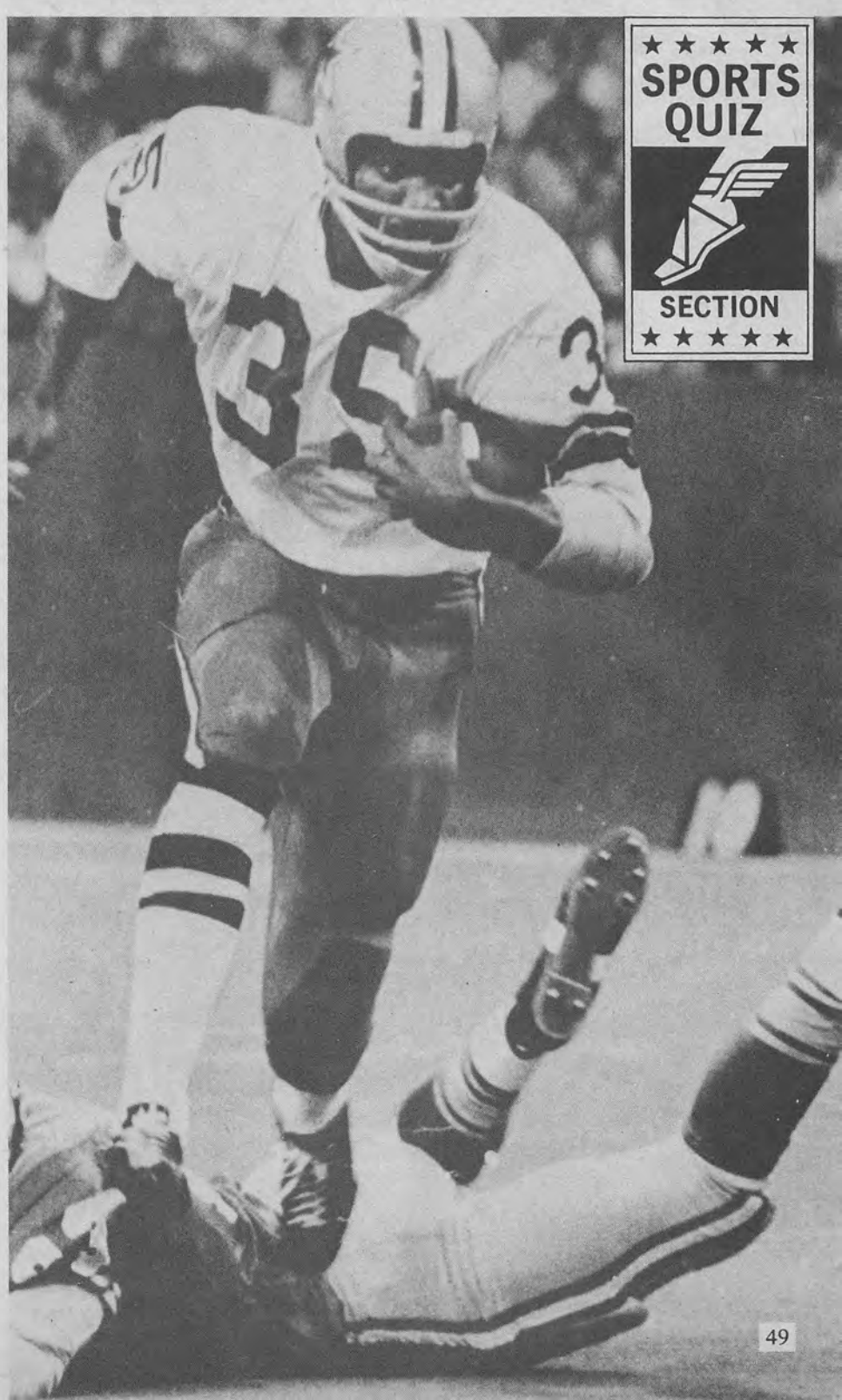
16. The career mark for yards gained on pass receptions is held by:
    a. Charley Taylor
    b. Don Maynard
    c. Raymond Berry
    d. Lionel Taylor

17. Which of these players is not among the NFL's top five rushers for yards gained?
    a. Jim Brown
    b. Leroy Kelly
    c. Joe Perry
    d. Gale Sayers

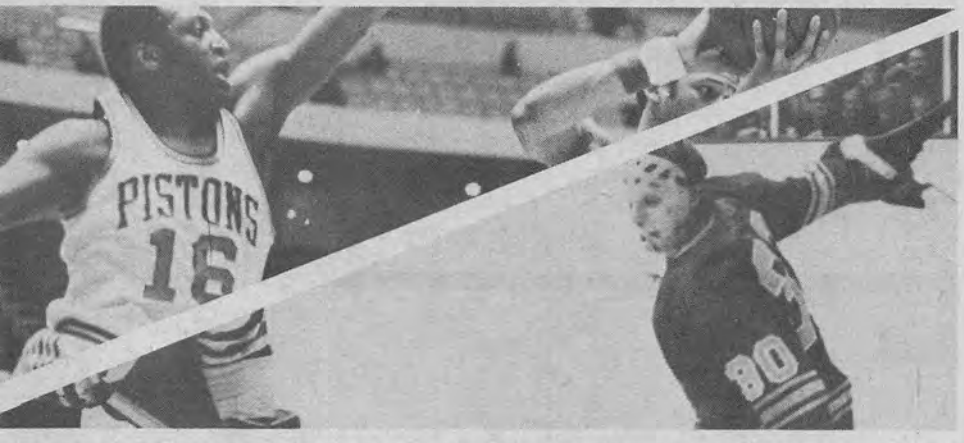
18. Who won the first sudden death NFL championship game?
    a. New York Giants
    b. Baltimore
    c. Miami
    d. Chicago

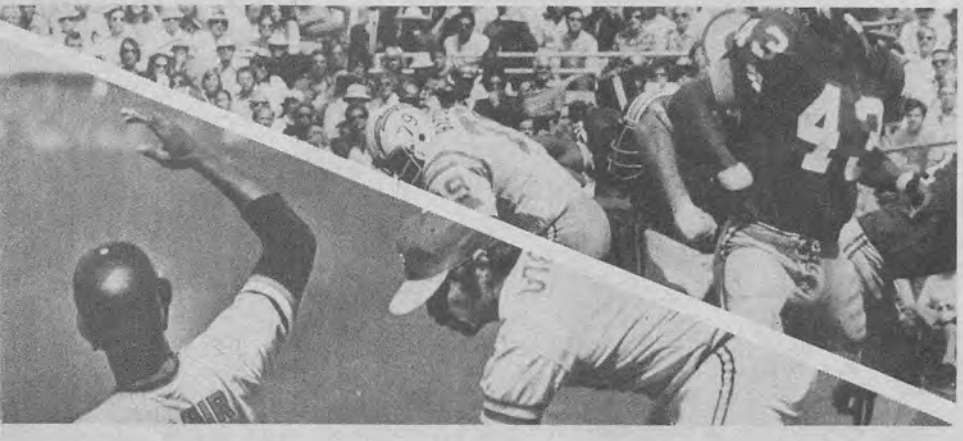
19. Name the last Pacific 8 Conference team to lose the Rose Bowl game?
    a. UCLA
    b. USC
    c. Oregon State
    d. Washington

20. The last quarterback to win the Heisman Trophy was:
    a. Joe Namath
    b. Roger Staubach
    c. Pat Sullivan
    d. Jim Plunkett



SPORTS GENIUS QUIZ





This quiz isn't easy. If you don't do well, don't get upset. These questions require a general knowledge of sports. Ten right answers is good, 11 is above average, 12 rates outstanding recognition and you're a master with 13 or more correct answers.

1. **Who led the NFL in field goals the most seasons?**
2. **Who won the 1978 Indy 500?**
3. **What team won the first World Series?**
4. **Who won the NBA's scoring championship last season?**
5. **Where will the 1980 Winter Olympics be held?**
6. **What pitcher fanned Mickey Mantle four times in a World Series game?**
7. **Who struck out Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Jimmy Fox, Al Simmons and Joe Cronin in succession during the 1934 All-Star game?**
8. **Name a pitcher charged with a balk when the wind blew him off the mound in an All-Star game.**
9. **What team has lost the most seven-game World Series?**
10. **Name the only school to win the NCAA and NIT basketball championships in the same season.**
11. **What position did Joe Garagiola play?**
12. **Who was the first pro bowler to earn $100,000 two consecutive years?**
13. **The last woman to win two consecutive years at Wimbledon was** _____.
14. **The last pitcher to record a shutout in the World Series is** _____.
15. **The first woman golfer to win $100,000 in a single year is** _____.

SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

IDENTIFY THE WINNER

Awards are enjoyable for those receiving them. In the column on the left are 10 awards, events or titles from the world of sports. Match the winner with the name in the column on the right. You need at least eight correct to pass the test.

1. ____	Triple Crown	A. Tom Watson
2. ____	Heisman	B. Ross Browner
3. ____	Cy Young	C. Courageous
4. ____	Rupp	D. Ken Dryden
5. ____	Masters	E. Affirmed
6. ____	Sullivan	F. Ferguson Jenkins
7. ____	Grand Slam	G. Butch Lee
8. ____	America's Cup	H. Bill Walton
9. ____	Conn Smythe	I. Roger Staubach
10. ____	Outland	J. Don Budge

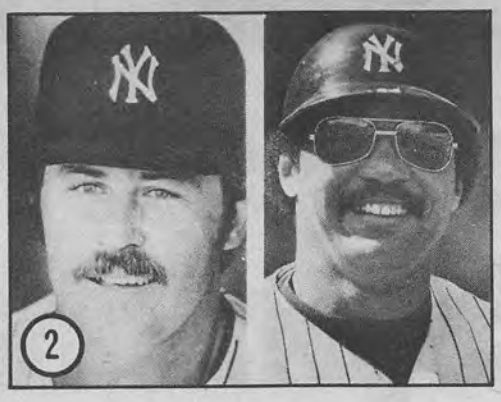
SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

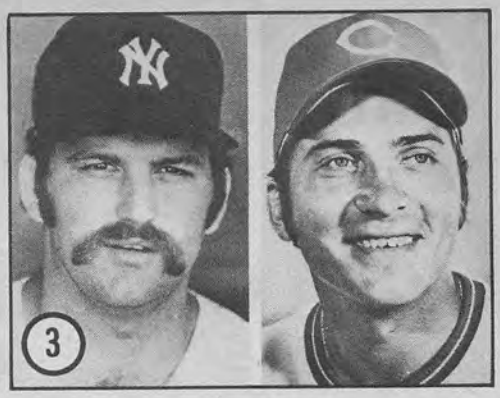
scramble sportsgram puzzle

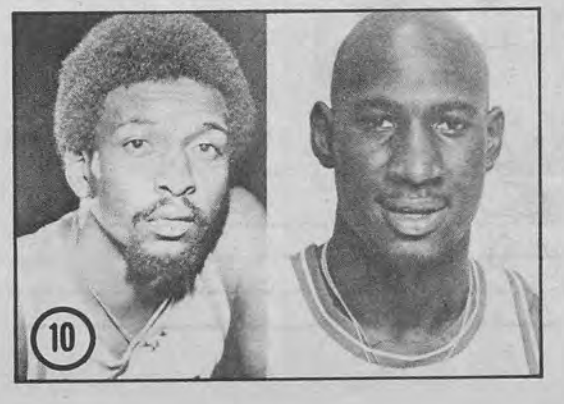
L	O	V	E	W	E	S	T	F	W
E	H	A	C	A	R	R	A	O	A
E	L	S	I	L	A	S	C	R	T
L	J	A	C	K	S	O	N	D	T
M	B	U	S	E	L	L	E	R	S
O	O	E	F	R	E	E	D	E	O
R	O	B	I	S	C	H	F	W	B
E	N	E	L	S	O	N	D	E	E
B	E	A	R	D	M	I	X	G	K
M	O	N	E	Y	L	U	C	A	S

The names of at least 27 current or past National Basketball Association players are hidden in these letters. The names are spelled either horizontally or vertically and the same letter can be used in more than one name.

You need a clock or watch to take this quiz. If you find 25 names in less than 10 minutes, you rate an A. Ten to 15 minutes gets you a B. If it takes more than 20 minutes to find at least 20, you have failed this test.







SPORTS PHOTO QUIZ

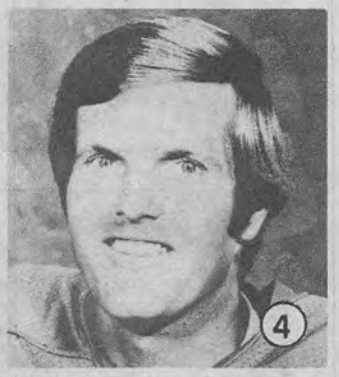
These athletes have been on television and had their pictures in the newspapers frequently. You should be able to answer at least eight of the 10 questions without too much trouble.

1. This athlete had quite a rookie year.
2. These players won world championships with two different teams.
3. These two usually play the same position.
4. Name the star and his sport
   A.____ B.____ C.____
5. This man moves quickly.
6. Who are these two men and what distinction do they have in common?
7. Name these former football stars:
   A.____ B.____ C.____
8. Who is this rich teenager?
9. This former basketball player became a championship coach.
10. These two went from high school to pro basketball.

SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

be a Pro Football Spotter

You probably know the difference between a first down and a touchdown. But can you identify these pro football stars? Anything less than 10 isn't a good performance.



1. Craig Morton
2. Greg Pruitt
3. Franco Harris
4. Bob Griese
5. Merlin Reasons
6. Harvey Martin
7. Tony Dorsett
8. Leon Stubbs
9. O.J. Simpson
10. Ken Stabler
11. Jim Hart
12. Staubach

You'll find the first names of current or former major league baseball players in the column on the left. The opposite column has last names of big leaguers. Your assignment is to unscramble the letters and mix the first name with the correct last name. You have a 15-minute time limit and should get at least 20 within that period.

1.	hcftasi	A.	mhecid
2.	illb	B.	rreyp
3.	olgadry	C.	obcar
4.	evad	D.	vccmoye
5.	hpli	E.	rheutn
6.	bbyob	F.	elcznoa
7.	woeodi	G.	ntyuo
8.	veets	H.	tropre
9.	frgesuno	I.	cdamlko
10.	llreoi	J.	gyeear
11.	ebeirn	K.	enirko
12.	arecs	L.	naminkg
13.	honj	M.	nnuoms
14.	nylam	N.	aaant
15.	umthanr	O.	gmlabe
16.	liweli	P.	amelnt
17.	fnrak	Q.	resttu
18.	ixots	R.	ngfiers
19.	wlyar	S.	mrruec
20.	ecurb	T.	knejnsi
21.	ocrsa	U.	ryamnf
22.	inobr	V.	oominreg
23.	yiemck	W.	nomtesufoc
24.	egergo	X.	saetkicw
25.	dallrre	Y.	toobskc

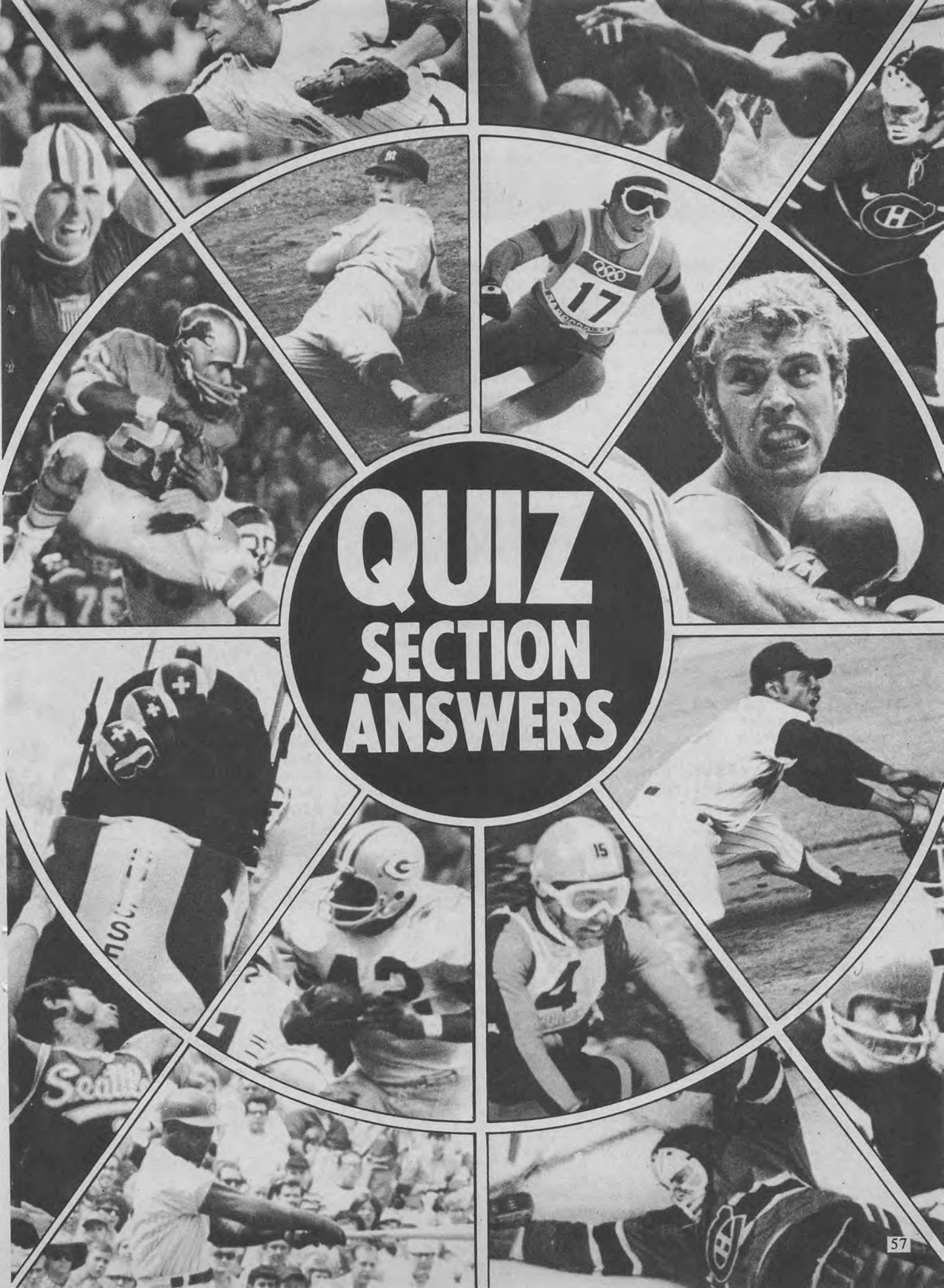
BASEBALL SCRAMBLE QUIZ

SPORTS QUIZ SECTION

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Keeping track of professional teams and their names can be difficult in these days of expansion, new leagues and financial problems. Here's a quiz to see if you've been keeping up with the rapidly changing sports scene. Twenty right is a passing grade, 22 means you're ready for the big leagues and 24 is outstanding. (Hint: Each city can be only used once.)

1. F	Nets	A. Chicago
2. D	Senators	B. Boston
3. P	Raiders	C. Los Angeles
4. V	Tams	D. Atlanta
5. U	Express	E. Carolina
6. R	Fire	F. New Jersey
7. W	Scouts	G. Cincinnati
8. L	Cardinals	H. Seattle
9. B	Colonels	I. Cleveland
10. J	Redlegs	J. Virginia
11. D	Braves	K. Dallas
12. K	Blazers	L. St. Louis
13. X	Pilots	M. Milwaukee
14. C	Dodgers	N. Kansas City
15. R	Rowdies	O. Washington
16. G	Chargers	P. Kentucky
17. X	Crusaders	Q. Philadelphia
18. N	Texans	R. Rochester
19. A	Hawks	S. Green Bay
20. T	Blue Jays	T. Toronto
21. H	Fighting Saints	U. Tampa Bay
22. E	Cougars	V. Memphis
23. I	Lancers	W. Brooklyn
24. S	Packers	X. Minnesota
25. N	Squires	Y. Detroit
26. M	Brewers	Z. New York



QUIZ SECTION ANSWERS

ANSWERS TO

THOSE WERE THE DAYS QUIZ

1. Detroit, Minnesota, Texas, New York
2. Boston Braves
3. Bobby Lowe, Ed Delahanty, Gil Hodges, Joe Adcock, Willie Mays, Lou Gehrig, Rocky Colavito
4. Rod Carew
5. a. San Francisco Giants
   b. Milwaukee Braves
   c. Cleveland Indians
   d. Texas Rangers
   e. San Francisco Giants
   f. Houston Colts
   g. New York Mets
   h. Washington Senators
   i. St. Louis Cardinals
   j. Los Angeles Dodgers
6. a. 2 Ty Cobb
   b. 3 John Candelaria
   c. 2 Washington
   d. 1 Minnesota
   e. 3 Ty Cobb
7. George Sisler
8. Atlanta Braves
9. San Diego
10. New York, Cincinnati, Los Angeles, Pittsburgh
11. 1-e 2-c 3-a 4-d 5-b
12. Johnny Vander Meer, Allie Reynolds, Nolan Ryan, Virgil Trucks
13. Ty Cobb, George Sisler, Harry Heilmann, Ted Williams, Rogers Hornsby, Bill Terry

DESPERATE DOZEN

1. Tom Lasorda
2. Joe Torre
3. Ted Marchibroda
4. Bobby Leonard
5. Tom Landry
6. Sparky Anderson
7. Jerry West
8. Walter Alston
9. Jack Ramsay
10. John Madden
11. Emile Francis
12. Billy Cunningham

FOOTBALL MULTIPLE CHOICE

1-b	2-a	3-b	4-d	5-d
6-c	7-c	8-d	9-b	10-a
11-c	12-a	13-d	14-b	15-a
16-b	17-d	18-b	19-b	20-c

IDENTIFY THE WINNER

1-e 2-i 3-f 4-g 5-a 6-h 7-j
8-c 9-d 10-b

SUPERSTARS OF THE PAST

1. Don Drysdale
2. Phil Rizzuto
3. Floyd Paterson
4. Paul Hornung
5. Bill Russell
6. Eddie Mathews
7. John Havlicek
8. Babe Didikson Zaharias
9. Mickey Mantle
10. Sugar Ray Robinson
11. Ray Nitschke
12. Brooks Robinson
13. Al Kaline
14. Jimmy Brown
15. Wilma Rudolph
16. George Blanda
17. Hank Aaron
18. Denny McLain

SCRAMBLE SPORTSGRAM

Love, West, Lee, Carr, Ray
Walk, Walker, Watts, Sobers, Ford
Elmore, Jackson, Buse, Sellers, Reed
Robisch, Free, Nelson, Beard, Ard
Mix, Fox, Money, Lucas, Boone
Silas, Ohl

SPORTS GENIUS

1. Lou Groza
2. Al Unser
3. Boston Red Sox
4. George Gervin
5. Lake Placid, N.Y.
6. Carl Erskine
7. Carl Hubbell
8. Stu Miller
9. St. Louis Cardinals
10. CCNY
11. Catcher
12. Earl Anthony
13. Billie Jean King
14. Luis Tiant
15. Judy Rankin

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

1. F	11. B	21. X
2. O	12. Q	22. E
3. Z	13. H	23. R
4. V	14. W	24. J
5. Y	15. U	25. M
6. A	16. C	
7. N	17. I	
8. L	18. K	
9. P	19. D	
10. G	20. T	

PRO FOOTBALL SPOTTER

1. Craig Morton
2. Walter Payton
3. Franco Harris
4. Bob Griese
5. Drew Pearson
6. Harvey Martin
7. Tony Dorsett
8. Roger Staubach
9. O. J. Simpson
10. Alan Page
11. Jack Ham
12. Lyle Alzado

SPORTS QUIZ

HOMECOMING DAY QUIZ

1.	Abdul-Jabbar	Los Angeles	UCLA
2.	Kent Benson	Milwaukee	Indiana
3.	Alvan Adams	Phoenix	Oklahoma
4.	Dan Issel	Denver	Kentucky
5.	Jack Sikma	Seattle	Illinois Wesleyan
6.	Dave Cowens	Boston	Florida St.
7.	Bobby Dandrige	Washington	Norfolk St.
8.	Doug Collins	Philadelphia	Illinois St.
9.	James Edwards	Indiana	Washington
10.	Bernard King	New Jersey	Tennessee
11.	George Gervin	San Antonio	Eastern Michigan
12.	Bob McAdoo	New York	North Carolina
13.	Calvin Murphy	Houston	Niagara
14.	Bob Lanier	Detroit	St. Bonaventure
15.	Randy Smith	Buffalo	Buffalo St.
16.	Jim Chones	Cleveland	Marquette
17.	John Drew	Atlanta	Gardner-Webb
18.	Leonard Robinson	New Orleans	Tennessee St.
19.	Mark Landsberger	Chicago	Arizona St.
20.	Wesley Cox	Golden State	Louisville
21.	Scott Wedman	Kansas City	Colorado
22.	Bob Gross	Portland	Long Beach St.
23.	David Thompson	Denver	N. Carolina St.
24.	Paul Westphal	Phoenix	USC
25.	Marvin Webster	Seattle	Morgan St.

BASEBALL SCRAMBLE

1.	E	Catfish Hunter
2	I	Bill Madlock
3	B	Gaylord Perry
4	L	Dave Kingman
5	K	Phil Niekro
6	S	Bobby Murcer
7	Y	Woodie Fryman
8	J	Steve Yeager
9	T	Ferguson Jenkins
10	R	Rollie Fingers
11	C	Bernie Carbo
12	V	Cesar Geronimo
13	W	John Montefusco
14	Y	Lyman Bostock
15	M	Thurman Munson
16	D	Willie McCovey
17	N	Frank Tanana
18	F	Sixto Lezcano
19	X	Rawly Eastwick
20	Q	Bruce Sutter
21	O	Oscar Gamble
22	G	Robin Young
23	P	Mickey Mantle
24	A	George Medich
25	H	Darrell Porter

MATCH THE NICKNAME

1.	e	2.	o	3.	k
4.	d	5.	j	6.	l
7.	n	8.	b	9.	g
10.	h	11.	a	12.	c
13.	i	14.	f	15.	m

BASEBALL MATCHUP

1.	e	2.	c	3.	g
4.	b	5.	j	6.	d
7.	l	8.	a	9.	k
10.	h	11.	m	12.	f
13.	i				

MEMORABLE MOMENTS IN SPORTS

1. 1976 — Nadia Comaneci stars in the Olympics, earning perfect scores and three gold medals.
2. 1962 — Sonny Liston knocks out Floyd Patterson in first round to win heavyweight championship in Chicago.
3. 1977 — Pele retires
4. 1965 — Sandy Koufax pitches perfect game against Chicago Cubs, the fourth no-hitter of his career.
5. 1971 — Jim O'Brien's 32-yard field goal with five seconds left gives Baltimore a 16-13 victory over Dallas in Super Bowl V.

SPORTS PHOTO QUIZ

1. Nancy Lopez
2. Catfish Hunter and Reggie Jackson
3. Thurman Munson and Johnny Bench
4. A. Gary Player—Golf
   B. Chris Evert—Tennis
   C. Pele—Soccer
5. A. J. Foyt
6. O. J. Simpson and Tony Dorsett. Winning the Heisman Trophy
7. A. Johnny Unitas
   B. Sonny Jurgensen
   C. Gale Sayers
8. Steve Cauthen
9. Al McGuire
10. Moses Malone and Darryl Dawkins

THE SOCCER BOOM—CAN IT LAST?

(Continued from page 37)

with 32,771 followed by Seattle with 24,-226. All told, the league showed an increase of 31 per cent in attendance by drawing more than 3-million fans. The league's average attendance was 13,359.

On the other side of the ledger, nine clubs averaged less than 10,000 per game. And their turnouts would have been much smaller had not Pele been making his final go-round. A check of the 17 others clubs shows that 15 of them drew their highest attendance when they were hosting the Cosmos.

Considering such, the indication would be that NASL attendances would drop off in 1978.

"I don't believe so," says Woosnam. "We have made our mark. Naturally, Pele was a big draw. He popularized the sport here and made people soccer fans."

Mike Martin, Cosmos' general manager, said, "It's my belief that the game's caught on and the team's caught on, although Pele was the attention-getter who accelerated our growth." Cosmos ticket manager Frank O'Reilly projects a boost in season ticket holders from 4,000 to 20,-000 in 1978.

Says Krikor Yepremian, brother of football's Garo and general manager of the Fort Lauderdale Strikers: "Pele has given us a foundation to build on." He expects to double his stadium's seating capacity for next season.

Woosnam is talking about increasing the NASL to 24 teams next season, even though he's had some lemons. The Connecticut franchise which had the worst draw (3,848 average), has been shifted to Oakland. Woosnam also is considering moving into other major cities such as Milwaukee, Cleveland, Boston, Houston, Philadelphia and Montreal—even though such big cities as Toronto, Chicago and St. Louis (a soccer hotbed among youngsters) failed to pull in big crowds. Colorado, Memphis and Detroit already have been added for 1978.

Woosnam is looking for a national television contract to broadcast one game a week. CBS has been through this before in the early days of the league, but a network probably will give it another try because of the nationwide soccer boom.

There are some other problems. While Pele and Beckenbauer pulled down million-dollar contracts, many of their teammates were pulling down meager salaries. The Minnesota Kicks, who ranked right up there with the Cosmos attendance-wise, reportedly had a player budget of less than $200,000. That comes out to less than $10,000 per player. Alan West, a first team all-star midfielder, made about $10,000.

American players, because they are not as skilled as the foreigners, are the lowest paid players.

This all leads to the possibility of a soccer players union in the United States. Ed Garvey, executive director of the National Football League's Players Association, has been trying to enroll the soccer players in a union. Naturally, NASL is opposed to this because it could shake their very foundation. Exorbitant demands, which have hit other organized sports, could be a disaster to the NASL since very few of their clubs are yet making a profit.

In an effort to Americanize soccer the NASL has established a quota system for U.S. players. The feeling is that Americans will tire of turning out to see foreigners and will want to see their own heroes. This could backfire. Fans will not turn out to see inferior talent. The NASL actually laid the groundwork for soccer's rise in popularity during the past decade by numerous instructional clinics, exhibition, giveaways and personal appearances. Funds were put into youth programs throughout the country to familiarize the parents and children with the sport. In some areas youngsters start in soccer programs as young as five.

The American Soccer League, which is the oldest professional (of sorts) soccer league in the United States (starting in 1933), formerly operated only in the East. But in recent years it moved across the nation, although with little success. Its average attendance was 3,500 in 1977. Financial instability has been its problem.

Bob Cousy, the former basketball star, took over as Commissioner of the ASL a couple of years ago and is determined to make the league a success.

"There is a place for two leagues in the American growth of soccer," he said. "There's no doubt we too have benefitted by Pele's popularity. We hope to grow along with the sport."

Cousy recently announced that the ASL has formed a management arm to help boost the league. A panel of outside consultants will manage the business activities of the league.

Soccer among youths has moved from the inner city into the suburbs. Some parents, perhaps feeling the blacks are too dominant in football and basketball, have pushed their children into soccer. Kids don't have to be 6-foot, 200-pounders, or 6-6 and run like the wind or jump like a kangaroo to participate.

The youngster doesn't wind up like a fourth-string linebacker sitting on the bench through rain and cold weather. Little League baseball, too, has felt the crunch of soccer. Enrollments have dipped.

Why sit on a bench for most of the game, get one at-bat and play two innings in right field where nobody hits the ball? A kid joins a soccer program and he's thrown right out on the field with boys and girls. Everyone is participating. They feel a part of the game.

And it's a cheap program to join for the individual and for schools. There's no big cash outlay like football for equipment.

Harry Saunders, president of the Cosmopolitan (formerly German-American) Soccer League in the metropolitan New York area for youngsters six to 19, feels leagues like his also have been major factors in increasing interest in soccer. He notes that hundreds of thousands of youngsters play in recreational leagues and on school teams throughout most parts of the United States. Estimates range from 750,000 and 1-million youngsters.

"Yet they suffer from two distinct disadvantages which must be tackled and corrected soon while the current fertility of the soccer craze lasts," he says.

Writing in the newspaper SOCCER WEEK, he said: "Soccer's governing body, the USSF, must train, through its existing coaching staff - and if necessary with the help of sponsorship from private industry—thousands of competent coaches for every level of youth soccer development so that the youngsters can reach their highest potential before entering school, college or senior club soccer. Not only should all active soccer organizations, if they don't want the train to pass them by, support this coaching program fully, but efforts must be made to have soccer teachers in the educational system participate in coaching courses."

Saunders points out that a three-month season is totally inadequate to develop a soccer player. Three months is the length of the soccer season in high schools and colleges.

"And," Saunders writes, to top it off, in most instances, (they) do everything in their power to prevent the aspiring player from continuing his soccer activities after the school season is over, instead of encouraging him to participate in readily available club soccer. Nowhere else in the world does an educationsl system assure for itself - or try to wield—such powers, which have included threats of suspension and loss of scholarship if a player tried to participate on Sundays in club soccer. A policy like this is totally contrary of the United States Constitution.

"Steps must be taken to correct this situation. The educational authorities and associations, concerned with the conduct of sports on an amateur level, in the high schools and colleges, must be made to realize that they are hindering a player's development, preventing him from reaching his full potential and maturity."

Saunders concludes: "To ignore the required additional activites is to relegate American boys to the position of benchwarmers in pro soccer, a necessary evil which one could do without but requires as a face saver. America's new soccer fans have a right to have their very own Pele or Beckenbauer. And American youngsters have a right to challenge any and all comers on the increasing number of soccer fields of this great country."

Saunders, like all U.S. soccer officials, would like to see the United States win the World Cup some day, This tournament, which pits the world's top soccer countries after various elimination rounds, was inaugurated in 1930. The United States entered a team which surprisingly gained the semifinals. But hardly anyone cared, unless their son was on the team. And in 1950, the U.S. squad sprang a stunning 1-0 upset over England. It prompted coach Bill Jeffrey to remark: "This is what we need to make the game go in the United States." But one memorable victory didn't make it go. Soccer had a long way to go, baby. After all, Americans had to use their hands, didn't they?

So soccer languished on the sandlots, mostly played by immigrants.

Back in 1940 a startling statement was made by Branch Rickey, known for his foresight as a baseball executive. He predicted that soccer would replace foot-

ball in college by 1990. Rickey may never be right on that count, but he did see a future for soccer few people did up to a few years ago.

Whether pro soccer makes it and the UnStates develops formidable World Cup team in the years to come remains to be seen.

But one thing is for certain, Pele started the ball rolling. ●

FROM THE SPORTS WIRE

(Continued from page 8)

"The thing I like about the television job is I'll be able to stay in touch with the game. Each day I've been doing a scouting report on one team. Doing my homework. Next month I'll be going to new York for a seminar involving the TV crews. I enjoyed doing TV color in '75. And I know I'm going to enjoy doing radio because you'll even have more time to express yourself.

"The one thing I've got to stay away from is being too technical. You also don't want to be a comedian. If you can relate a story to an incident in the game, fine. If not, keep quiet. With the producer talking into your ear when you're talking, it's quite a challenge."

* * *

A matter of discipline. It's still the key to the successful athlete contends Duke University basketball coach Bill Foster. Says Foster, "It's the non-athlete who's afraid of discipline. Athletes want it and need it. Time has changed the game of basketball, but the basics are the same. We have to emphasize that in this day of slam dunks and hero worship and entertainers." ●

CAN CRAIG MORTON BEAT HIS BAD RAP?

(Continued from page 21)

he noticed that throughout the game Morton would look to the area in which he intended to pass. It was a flaw that either no one had spotted before, or that Morton had developed under the pressure of the Super Bowl.

It was not a performance that bolstered Landry's confidence in Morton, which somehow always seemed to be the weakest characteristic in their coach-quarterback relationship. It would later prove the key to Dallas' Super Bowl victory over Denver in New Orleans.

Morton was Dallas' top draft choice out of California in 1965, picked, it was expected, as the eventual successor to Don Meredith. Landry told him it would take four years for him to become the Cowboys' number one quarterback, and he kept telling him that during the four years Morton waited. Eventually, he did replace Meredith as the top quarterback, but it

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wasn't long before evidence began to indicate that Landry was not sure Morton was up to being number one.

Early in the 1970 season, Landry announced that Staubach had replaced Morton as his starter. It was Landry's explanation that Morton's performance level had fallen below the minimum requirements set by the coach. In putting Staubach ahead of Morton, Landry chose to ignore his own philosophy that it takes four years to develop a first-string quarterback. Staubach was in his second pro year.

Morton later regained his starting job, but he never again had a solid grip on it. Super Bowl V didn't help. Not too far into the 1971 season, Landry began to alternate Morton and Staubach as starters, and as the season headed into its second half, Staubach was number one. He then justified Landry's faith in him by leading the Cowboys to their Super Bowl victory in Tulane Stadium.

Morton had a resurgence in 1972, but it ended when Staubach was sent in by Landry to bail out the Cowboys in an opening round playoff game with San Francisco. It was another example of Landry's lack of faith in Morton's ability to win the big game.

Morton groused and asked to be traded, but it was not until 1974 that he got his wish. He helped provoke his departure by failing to show up at spring conditioning camp, and by signing a future contract with the ill-fated World Football League's Texans.

As he went to the New York Giants, Morton not one to burn any bridges behind him, declared he had been treated fairly by Dallas and Landry, while the coach responded by wishing him well.

Morton's two and a half years with the Giants were uninspired, both for the quarterback and the team. As the Giants' Director of Operations, Andy Robustelli recalls that difficult time, "We found him to be a great player if he had the tools to work with. We didn't have those tools. We were a young, building team. We could not surround Morton with the good people he needs to function with." The fans, not as understanding, booed him.

At Denver last year, Morton apparently was surrounded with the type of talent he needed. Miller, having succeeded John Ralston as Broncos coach, acquired Morton from the Giants for quarterback Steve Ramsey, because, said Miller, "he would give us something we could not buy or acquire in a draft, experience." Also, Miller added, "I always liked the way he threw the ball."

Morton and the Broncos hit it off right from the start. He was elected the team's offensive captain, and to Miller's delight, "he took charge from his very first huddle."

The feeling of being wanted was a welcome change for Morton, after having been booed by the Giants' fans (he later said he understood their frustration at suffering through so many losing seasons) and being treated like a yo-yo by Landry in the coach's ever-changing decisions about who was and who was not his starting quarterback.

More than the warmth that came with being wanted, though, Morton had the "tools" that Robustelli said he needed to be a winner. He commanded an offense that included running backs Otis Armstrong and Rob Lytle, and pass receivers such as Haven Moses, Rick Upchurch, and Riley Odoms, who Morton described as "as good a tight end as I've ever thrown to."

The Broncos, with a crew that included Lyle Alzado, Louis Wright, Randy Gradishar, Bill Thompson and Tom Jackson, had a defense that took advantage of turnovers and, in fact, created them. In doing so, time and time again they gave Morton and his offensive unit good field position.

These were advantages Morton did not have with the Giants, and he began to perform again as he did during his best days with Dallas. He showed mobility he rarely had displayed, even in Dallas, and he became the leader Miller had hoped he would be when he acquired Morton from the Giants.

Denver became the surprise team of 1977, and won 12 of its 14 games. "That's five more than a lot of people figured us for," Morton crowed. To questions about his "rebirth" as a quarterback, he replied, "I am the same player I was before but the situation is different."

Morton, those who knew him said, was just waiting for an opportunity to show how different the situation was by wiping out the bitter memories of his two previous Super Bowls, the one in which he played and the one in which he was kept from playing. With Morton leading the way, the Broncos won the first playoff game in their 18-year history, beating the Pittsburgh Steelers, 34-21. That game was close going into the final two minutes, when Morton put it out of reach with a surprise 34-yard touchdown bomb to Jack Dolbin, a surprise because everyone expected a run that would eat up some time. It was Morton who had suggested the play.

Next, the Broncos and Morton won the AFC title with a 20-17 victory over the Oakland Raiders. A superb performance by Morton included two touchdown strikes to Moses.

All that remained then for Morton to fulfill his yearning for vindication, and once and for all to erase the charge that he could not win the big one, was to win the big one in New Orleans. The fact that he would have a chance to do it against the Cowboys, with whom the bitter reputation was born, seemed almost too poetic to be anything but fiction.

In fiction, Morton may have finally cut the albatross from around his neck. In the intense reality of the Super Bowl, and un-

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der the pressure of an assault from very real characters such as Harvey Martin, the "Smiling Assassin," Randy White and Jethro Pugh, it was not to be.

Morton's first pass was on target, to Moses, and it was good for a 21-yard gain. Morton's second pass was aimed at Odoms, but it never got beyond the line of scrimmage. Dallas end Ed (Too Tall) Jones batted it down.

Things quickly got worse for Morton when he was sacked by White. The pressure was on, and Morton hurried his next two passes. Both were overthrown. Then, with White about to deck him again, Morton got off a wobbly toss, and it was intercepted by Randy Hughes. It was a pass that never should have been thrown. That first interception set up Dallas' first touchdown.

Minutes later, Morton was in trouble again because of another pass that never should have been. Being pressed by Jones, Morton threw quickly, without much direction, and the ball wound up in the hands of Dallas' Aaron Kyle. That one led to a Cowboys' field goal.

The Cowboys kept applying the pressure in the second quarter, and Morton kept throwing the ball to people he shouldn't. Benny Barnes made the third interception, and Mark Washington the fourth, and the first half ended with Dallas in front 13-0.

Morton was not the only one turning the ball over. There were fumbles on both sides, and, in fact, Morton would have been intercepted a fifth time had it not been for a Dallas bobble. Too Tall Jones had a Morton pass fly into his hands in the third quarter, only to drop it.

It was obvious by then that Morton still was saddled with his Super Bowl demon. Aside from those interceptions, he managed to complete only four of 15 passes for 39 yards. The leadership he had displayed during the season was not in evidence, and also gone was the mobility he suddenly developed in the Broncos drive toward the AFC title.

Mercifully, Miller replaced him with Norris Weese.

In the aftermarth of another Morton disaster, people looked for an explanation. Why had a quarterback who had been intercepted only eight times during the regular season, the fewest in the AFC, thrown four interceptions, and nearly five, in the Super Bowl Game? What happened to turn the cool-headed quarterback into a frantic, unsure player?

Landry professed to be surprised that Morton had not taken his sacks as he did during the season, and instead, chose to throw the ball up for grabs, and to take chances he ordinarily did not take.

The wise Dallas coach, though, may not really have been surprised, at all. He must have remembered Morton's first Super Bowl performance in 1917 when he was Landry's quarterback, and when he suddenly turned inept. Landry must have remembered because he told his Dallas players in the days preceding the Super Bowl game that Morton rattles easily, and the way to make him become unglued was to keep applying the pressure.

White confirmed that "the game plan was to rattle Morton."

Morton, in reviewing the game since, has said, "Dallas seemed to know almost every play we were calling. I tried the audi-

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bles, but they even read those signals."

Was it that, or was it that the Cowboys knew what would happen if they put the rush on Morton in a Super Bowl game, because Landry had told them? ●

GEORGE ALLEN AND THE RAM CRISIS

(Continued from page 29)

six months for Allen to sign the contract-"and nothing happened."

"I gave George Allen unlimited patience and he exhausted it," said Williams. "In all fairness to the people I will be negotiating with, I could not be talking to someone else about a job and allow Allen the option of changing his mind."

Allen apparently had delayed signing the contract because of Williams' desire to have more of a voice in the team's financial matters and personnel. Williams and other club executives had become disturbed at Allen's salary structure (Williams claimed the Redskins had the highest payroll in the NFL; Allen denied it), his free spending and his loss of so many high draft choices through trades.

Allen wanted to maintain his powers, contending that a coach needed complete control of his team.

Williams also was aware that Allen had been making overtures about the vacant Los Angeles coaching job, and said, "I want a coach who has Washington as his first choice."

And so Williams dumped Allen, touching off a war of nasty words.

"I believe we had an agreement in July," said Williams. "We had agreed to all terms. I then sought to get a signed contract and did not get one. I finally told him that the club was being seriously prejudiced by the paralysis it was in from not knowing where we were going next season (1978)."

Allen called Williams "devious, deceitful and a Jekyll and Hyde."

I always thought this would be my last coaching job," Allen added. "To say that I've been thinking about going to the Rams is untrue and inaccurate. I don't have any job with the Rams.

"My first choice has always been the Redskins. I wouldn't have planted apple trees that I brought down from Carlisle (the Redskins' training camp at Carlisle, Pa.) if I planned to leave here. I wouldn't have done the things around the house if I hadn't planned to be here for a long time."

Allen also painted a sordid picture of high-level interference, lies and backstabbing during his seven years with Williams.

"He hasn't supported me at all," charged Allen. "He's devious and deceitful. Another thing I don't appreciate is having somebody call me at 11 o'clock at night, getting me out of bed, and telling me that if I didn't change quarterbacks I'm not going to get a new contract."

Williams then softened somewhat and said he regretted some of the charges Allen had made, adding, "I hold George in warm regard and think he is an excellent coach. I am sorry I was not able to sign him."

Some of the Redskins' players were just as sorry.

Kicker Mark Moseley called Allen "the greatest coach in the league. I'm sure that a few players will retire...Coach Allen got me back in the game, helped me find myself."

"I just can't believe it," said 17-year veteran cornerback Pat Fischer. "I felt all along that Mr. Williams and Coach Allen would be able to get together and resolve the situation."

"It's a shocker," said center Len Hauss. "I didn't think this would happen. I know people are talking about Jack Pardee coming here (Pardee eventually was named to replace Allen). I think he's a tremendous coach, but it takes a certain type of guy to run this team and I'm not sure he's as good as George."

"I felt he and the club would get together," said safety Ken Houston. "The longer things remained open, the more I thought it could be patched up. But for it to come to this, it's kind of unreal. It caught me off balance."

"I'm just shocked," said Diron Talbert. "I played with him in two organizations. He's the type of coach this team needs. Washington needs a winner, they expect one here and they need him to keep it that way. It won't be the same without George. There is a coach or two capable of handling this team, but not like George."

Quarterback Billy Kilmer also was sorry to see Allen leave.

"George Allen is going to win in Los Angeles and win big, believe me," said Kilmer. "I'd like to finish my career trying to help him go all the way to a Super Bowl title. I like George and I'd like to play for him in LA. He's the only coach I've had in my 16 years in the National Football League who is a winner. I think George is the finest football coach in America."

Kilmer also said that as much as he "grew up with the Rams and really loved them," he would remain a loyal member of the Redskins and "try to help make them a winner."

"But I know this: The Rams will be in the playoffs again in 1978, with or without Bill Kilmer," he continued. "They've got great material and talent. It'll be just a matter of getting them motivated to win in the playoffs. And George Allen is a master motivator."

Another who was certain that the Rams would make the playoffs this year was former President Richard M. Nixon.

Nixon, an avid football fan and friend of Allen's, said: "I'll bet even money he takes the Rams to the Super Bowl...with all that talent. I'm not saying they will win the Super Bowl, but I think he'll get them there at least."

Nixon then disclosed a side of Allen that is not often publicized. He praised the coach for his "concern for little people" and for "the things Allen does quietly behind the scenes."

The former president pointed out that Allen "became very concerned about the problems of the American Indian while he was in Washington" and headed a committee on the subject. He said that Allen "attended meetings and banquets to raise money and support for scholarships for poor Indian kids."

Nixon also noted that "the mayor of Washington, D.C., who is a black man, told me that George Allen was a great help to him in many important city programs."

While the Redskins' players and others were espousing the mertis of Allen, the Rams' players and others were verbally blasting him.

Merlin Olsen, a former All-Pro tackle with the Rams and currently an NFL color commentator, said: "Allen operates in a very pressurized atmosphere. At the end of a season with George, I felt like I had been beaten with 1,000 war clubs. It's like you're on the inside of a giant bass drum."

"The Rams are in for some dull football," said Jack Snow, a former wide receiver with the Rams. "I've played football under George. He's a good guy, but let me say this: the fans have been screaming for a more exciting offense. Well, they can forget it. George would be the happiest guy in the world if he won every game 2-0, thanks to the defense and a safety."

"I can't believe Allen is the new coach," Isiah Robertson said with disgust. "I don't know about the other members of the team, but I can't play under that kind of pressure. It makes me sick."

(Robertson later apologized for his initial reactions to Allen's hiring, saying, "I overreacted when I (first) spoke out. Now that I've had time to think about it, I realize that when you're a professional, you just cope with whatever you must.").

While Robertson apologized for his original remarks about Allen's hiring, other Rams players did not.

"Do you believe it?" said Bill Simpson. "I don't. Why Allen? It's hard for me to understand it, it's hard for everybody to understand. We've talked about it, and all the players have agreed we hope the change works and we'll do everything we can, but on the face of things, George Allen wasn't the most natural choice."

Simpson then gave some reasons for thinking Allen was the wrong choice.

"We already have a great defense, it's scoring that's been the problem," he said. "It's been the offensive coordination that's failed. What does George Allen know about offense? He's a great defense guy, but that's not what we needed.

"Another thing, the Rams have been ripped with inner problems, and Allen comes to the team with a rep of having problems getting along with the owner. That's just what we need, more conflicts."

Not only did Allen have problems with Edward Bennett Williams, he had them with Dan Reeves, when Reeves owned the Rams in the 1960s. Allen coached the Rams from 1966 until 1969, when Reeves fired him. But Allen was reinstated when players and fans objected to the dismissal. He was fired again the next year, and then took over at Washington.

Later, Reeves tried to rationalize why he preferred Harland Svare to the more successful Allen as coach, saying: "It was more fun losing with Svare than it was winning with Allen."

Williams was aware of Allen's reputation when he hired him to coach the Redskins. But he gave him a seven-year contract at $125,000 annually, plus such bonuses as a chauffeur and an option to buy stock in the team.

At first, Williams jested about Allen's lavish spending habits, saying: "I gave George an unlimited expense account and he exceeded it in his first month with us."

But afterward, it began to rankle him,

and he let Allen know about it. Williams also became dismayed about the Redskins' high payroll and Allen's continual loss of draft choices. After seven years, Williams obviously thought the expenditures no longer justified the results, and although he had said on the day that he signed Allen, "I'll never hire another coach," he was forced to do exactly that after firing Allen.

"To be perfectly honest," said a Redskins player, "a lot of guys were sick of George. The rah-rah approach was getting old."

On the outside, Allen comes across as a gee-whiz, gosh-oh-golly, milkshake-drinking, toothpaste-smiling individual. Inside however, lies a different character.

One who will attest to that is Alex Webster, former coach of the New York Giants. Webster remembers a game in which the Redskins, coached by Allen, were beating the Giants, coached by Webster, by a decisive margin in the closing minutes. Most coaches at that time would let the clock run out without trying to score again. But not Allen. He wanted another touchdown—and he got it.

Afterwards, Webster was fuming, and he did not attempt to hide his feelings about Allen, cursing him furiously in the Giants' dressing room. He then told the media: "If you're going to his (Allen's) locker room, then tell him what I said, and if he doesn't like it, I'll come down there and punch his damned head off."

Earlier, when Allen coached the Rams, with his team leading the Giants by more than 40 points, Allen ordered a last-minute field goal. The act was so offensive to one of the Rams' players that after the game he went to the Giants' locker room and apologized.

Allen also had drawn the wrath of the Chicago Bears, who accused him of failing to honor a commitment as assistant coach and running out to become head coach of the Rams in 1966; the NFL office, which penalized him for trading a draft choice he never owned; other NFL clubs for talking to players cut by the team Allen's team was going to play the following week about that club's offensive and defensive strategies, then not signing the player, and by the media for his pugnacious attitude toward them and his indifferent treatment of them.

Now, at Los Angeles, Allen has a new boss, Carroll Rosenbloom, who has made no secret of wanting to run the team. He has made Allen only the coach (the general manager is Don Klosterman). It was Rosenbloom who decided to sign gimpy legged quarterback Joe Namath last year without even informing Chuck Knox, and it was Rosenbloom who demanded that Knox switch starting quarterbacks (from Namath to Haden) after four games last season.

So why did Rosenbloom hire the strong-headed Allen?

There are two reasons.

One, the Rams have been hurting at the gate, and Rosenbloom knows that Allen is good copy and the fans will come out each Sunday to boo or cheer him.

And secondly, Rosenbloom believes that with the talent the Rams have, Allen can take them to the Super Bowl.

That remains to be seen. ●

WILL O.J. SIMPSON'S DREAM COME TRUE?

(Continued from page 13)

The injury sidelined Simpson for the remainder of the season and he underwent surgery for cartilage damage.

O.J.'s injury prompted some of his teammates to predict it had been Simpson's last game as a Bill and they speculated that he might be traded to a contender.

"I see no reason why they should keep him," said guard Joe DeLamielleure. "It's going to be a rebuilding process here that's going to take a few years. He deserves a chance to play in a Super Bowl. We'd all like to see it."

Wide receiver Bob Chandler added, "There is a feeling that he might not be back, but nothing was said as such. But the definite feeling is there."

And that's how it stood from late October to March as Simpson worked to rehabiliate his knee, apparently destined to play out his career in the frigid and snowy city he never wanted to go to in the first place.

But enter Chuck Knox, who resigned after leading the Rams into the playoff to replace Jim Ringo as coach of the hapless Bills. And enter Joe Thomas, doing his utmost to rebuild the 49ers.

Simpson would still be running for the Bills today if Knox hadn't insisted upon unloading O.J. as a means of building for the future. Even with O.J. Knox knew the Bills would have a tough time playing winning football. Besides, he knew O.J.'s running talent became wasted when the Bills were forced to play catch-up football by putting the ball in the air.

It took three weeks of negotiations before the deal was consummated.

And if you don't think Wilson would shed a tear or two when he traded Simpson, listen to his remark earlier when O.J. was injured: "It reminds me of something that happened in the past. It was two days after the bomb dropped at Hiroshima. I was there and the feeling I had then is the same way I feel today about O.J.'s injury. It was a terrible blow to football and the Buffalo Bills." After the trade, Wilson said, "O.J. is a great person and a great athlete. It made me cry to lose him."

Although Simpson didn't shed any tears over his departure from Buffalo, he did admit that he was a little saddened when the deal was concluded. "The other night I started thinking about Buffalo," he said. "I was kind of down. I thought about all the guys on the team and there was some sadness. I've spent my whole adult life as a Buffalo Bill."

Simpson also remembered when he was a youngster with skinny legs, running with street gangs in south San Francisco and living in a federally-funded apartment project. "I always was a cocky kid," he recalled. "I always thought I'd be a great baseball player, then a great football player. But I never thought about all the off-the-field things.

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think about it all, it's overwhelming."

At Buffalo Simpson led the NFL in rushing four times and held the single-game mark at 273 yards until last year when it was smashed by the Chicago Bears' Walter Payton, who gained 275 yards against Minnesota. Last season O.J. gained 557 yards on the ground and trails Jim Brown's record of 12,312 yards by just 2,129.

Simpson also holds the single-season rushing record with 2,003 yards in 1973. Since 1969 when he was the NFL's top draft pick after winning the Heisman Trophy at Southern California, Simpson has scored 71 touchdowns. At Southern Cal, the star halfback broke 13 school records in two years. He tip-toed his way for 3,423 yards on 674 tries and established an NCAA rushing record of 1,709 yards as a senior. Before that Simpson starred at San Francisco City College and Galileo High School in San Francisco.

At the 49ers new conference announcing his acquisition, Simpson walked into the packed room at a downtown hotel, clapping his hands. "Home at last," he said enthusiastically. "Thank God Almighty, I'm home at last."

Simpson went on: "I had some good years in Buffalo, but hopefully I can get here what I couldn't get there, and that is a championship. I'm with my family and doing what I like best. The price I had to pay isn't as heavy. The only price I'll have to pay is getting my body in shape. I love football and I want to play as long as I can, as long as I'm effective."

O.J. had to undergo a knee examination by the 49ers before the trade was finalized. "The knee is fine," he said. "I've been playing some tennis and running a little to stay in shape. All I really need is to strengthen it a little."

During his introduction at the news conference, Simpson added, "Obviously I'm ecstatic. I was a 49er fan when I was a kid. When I was a kid I used to dream of leading the 49ers to a championship. Now I have that opportunity."

O.J. also recalled, "From 1957 until I went to USC in 1967 I never missed a 49er game. I used to scalp tickets outside Kezar Stadium when I was a kid. The 49ers made it possible for me to eat in the school cafeteria."

Thomas was beaming at the news conference. He said, "It is hard for me to believe that the gentleman sitting next to me is actually here and is a 49er. O.J. can play for at least three years, and if he does it will be the finest acquisition this club has ever made.

"The thing that approved it for me was that we didn't have to give up any of our players or our No. 1 draft choice this year."

Some of the Bills seemed relieved that the trade of O.J. was finally made. Said DeLamielleure, "We haven't won with O.J., so now we have to try and win without him." Joe Ferguson, Bills quarterback, added, "I think the deal may help us. We need some players. I'm sure coach Knox will get something out of the deal."

Knox said, "We have given up the services of a superb athlete, but we have put ourselves in the position in this and future drafts to obtain the kind of quality players who can make Buffalo a strong franchise for years to come."

Meantime, there's new enthusiasm in San Francisco where attendance has dropped off last year. In addition to O.J., the 49ers have a new coach in Pete McCulley, a former assistant at Washington and Baltimore. Youthful owner Edward De Bartoto Jr., and Thomas are in their second year with the club.

The acquisition of Simpson paved the way for more 49er deals. Running back Delvin Williams, who set a 49er record by rushing for 1,203 yards in 1976 and piled up 931 yards last . eason despite missing some playing time with injuries, became expendable. He was traded in April to the Dolphins in exchange for wide receiver Freddie Solomon and defensive back Vern Roberson along with the first and fifth round draft picks for 1978.

"The key was to get a first-round pick from somebody," said Thomas. "I know people were concerned that we were giving away all our draft picks in the O.J. trade. But that's not the way I operate. This trade will offset practically the entire O.J. trade."

Thomas utilized his first draft pick to nab Ken MacAfee, the All-American from Notre Dame who'll move right into a starting spot at tight end. The next five-round pick by San Francisco was Danny Bunz, a linebacker who has a chance to start. Other high picks, are offensive linemen Walt Downing from Michigan and Ernie Hughes from Notre Dame, who will help rebuild a new front for Simpson to move through. Terry LeCount, a wide receiver from Florida, is swift and elusive and could be a real find.

Solomon, a three-year NFL veteran, had not been a regular with the Dolphins, which had an over abundance of pass receivers, but has a solid chance of being a regular with the 49ers. He caught 12 passes for 181 yards last season, scoring once on a 54-yard completion. He also returned 10 kickoffs for 273 yards and scored on a 90-yard return, and returned 32 punts for 285 yards.

Roberson, 25, played free safety as a reserve with the Dolphins last season, and will also be counted on for special teamwork with the 49ers.

Wilbur Jackson, a fullback who has rushed for nearly 1,600 yards for the 49ers in two seasons, will be O.J.'s running mate in the backfield.

Frisco quarterback Jim Plunkett, who has been less than successful in his two seasons with the 49ers after being acquired from New England for top draft choices in '77 and '78, said he was delighted about his new teammate, Simpson. "O.J. may be the player to get us over the hump. I don't think we're that far away from being a contending team. O.J. is a tremendous runner, one of the finest ever to play football and we're lucky to get somebody of his caliber. We have some fine running backs as it is, but O.J. is in a class by himself."

The 49ers already have a tough defense and the addition of Simpson to the offense could be just what's needed for O.J. to reach his ultimate goal. ●

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GERVIN: BASKETBALL'S UNLIKELY SUPERSTAR

(Continued from page 25)

city, the Green Bay of the fabulous NBA.

If Gervin had played for a team in New York or Los Angeles or Chicago or Boston or Philadelphia, there wouldn't have been any doubt that he was the most productive and most consistent player in the NBA last season, because the publicity for him would have been deafening.

But because Gervin toiled for a team in San Antonio, the acclaim for him was slow in building, only reaching a crescendo on the final day of the regular season when he overtook Thompson for the scoring title with an incredible 63-point performance that included a record 33 points in one quarter, the second.

Gervin's closing burst gave him a 27.22 scoring average, compared to Thompson's 27.15. In addition to leading the league in scoring, Gervin, appropriately nicknamed "The Iceman," for his cool, calm demeanor, had the best field goal percentage among guards (.536), the most rebounds for a guard (420), he was the first guard in league history to block more than 100 shots in a season (110), and he showed his durability and stamina by playing in all of San Antonio's 82 regular-season games.

Thus, taking all of his accomplishments into account, the computer gave Gervin a Productive Efficiency Rating of 78.30, compared to 75.44 for runner-up Paul Westphal of Phoenix. Thompson finished third at 71.81, followed by Davis at 69.79, Abdul-Jabbar at 69.79, Golden State's Rick Barry at 68.44 and New York's Bob McAdoo at 67.67.

In truth, Gervin did have an edge over Thompson on the final day of the season in their tense struggle for the league scoring championship. The main reason was that Thompson played an afternoon game, while Gervin was not scheduled to play until at night.

So after Thompson had unleashed an amazing 73-point effort during Denver's 139-137 loss to the Detroit Pistons, including a record 32 in one quarter, the first (the old mark was 31 by Wilt Chamberlain during his 100-point game against New York on March 2, 1962), Gervin knew exactly how many points he needed (58) against New Orleans that night to win the scoring title.

"I haven't ever hit 58," the rail-thin Gervin said before the game against the Jazz, "but I'm going for them. It's all out in front of me to match."

And Gervin, the fastest basketball gunner in the state of Texas, wasted no time in taking dead aim on his target. By the end of the first quarter, he had fired in 20 points. And by halftime, following his record 33-point shootout in the second period, his total was 53.

He played only 11 minutes in the second half, scoring 10 points, including a 10-foot turnaround jumper with about five minutes remaining in the fourth period that lifted his average above Thompson's and gave him the championship, despite the Spurs' 153-132 loss to the Jazz.

"He's always been a great shooter," Thompson said of the sharpshooting Gervin, who hit 23 of 49 from the field and 17 of 20 from the free throw line against New Orleans. "When I got my points, I figured they (the Spurs) would be going to him."

Thompson figured right.

"Our game plan was to get Louis Dampier his two points (for a career total of 15,000) and to get George Gervin his 58 points (enough for the title)," said San Antonio Coach Doug Moe.

"That was a phenomenal performance by George," continued Moe. "We were going to him exclusively and the Jazz were trying to stop him exclusively, and it was something to watch."

Moe added, "George could have scored 80 points easy, the way he was going. If we had come out in the second half trying to win the game, we could have done it, because the Jazz were playing two men on George all night and we always had someone open."

"All the Jazz defenders were tough and they kept a hand in my face all night," Gervin said modestly.

Gus Bailey, the Jazz player who spent most of the time guarding Gervin, said, "It's the hardest job in the league trying to guard someone when you know four guys will be feeding him. . .The other guys aren't shooting, so he had 24 seconds to get open. It was 24 seconds of having to play constant defense."

Only the unusual circumstances (the scoring title being on the line) dictated Gervin's all-out effort on offense. Usually, "I pace myself," he said. "That's how I play my game. . .in spurts. I pass the ball, try to get everybody else involved in the game. I know I have a green light to shoot the ball and I know most of the time I'm going to make it, but it's a team effort."

Despite Gervin's insistence that it was a team effort, it was mostly through his leadership that the upstart Spurs won the Central Division title with a 52-30 record, the third best in the league, last season, in only their second year in the NBA.

What is more amazing, however, is that Gervin almost didn't make it to the pros.

Gervin, the product of a broken home from the ghetto of Detroit's east side, began his collegiate career at Long Beach State under Coach Jerry Tarkanian. But he didn't last long.

"I went there for a couple of weeks," he recalled, "but I couldn't adjust to the life style and climate. I was just a young guy from Michigan and it was too drastic a change for me. I missed my family (his mother and a total of five brothers and sisters) and decided I'd be better off near home."

So Gervin returned home and enrolled at Eastern Michigan University. After sitting out some time as a transfer student, he averaged 17.6 points in nine games of the 1970-71 season and raised his average to 29.5 for 30 games the following season, leading Eastern Michigan into the NCAA College Division Tournament at Evansville, Ind.

It was in that tournament that his bright basketball career almost ended.

"I was playing a game and I punched a guy (Jay Piccola of Roanoke College)," Gervin explained about one of his rare outbursts of emotion. "It just happened."

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resulted in the 19-year-old Gervin getting expelled from Eastern Michigan.

It also cost him a chance at making the 1972 U.S. Olympic team. "I was invited to the Olympic Trials," said Gervin, "but, after that incident, the invitation was withdrawn."

After the unexpected turn of events, Gervin drifted around Detroit for a while. But he couldn't shake basketball out of his system, and so he signed with the Pontiac, Mich. team of the Continental League.

It was there that he got his big break.

On a night in which he scored 50 points, among the spectators were former NBA star Johnny Kerr, then a scout for the Virginia Squires of the American Basketball Association. Kerr returned to Squires owner Earl Foreman with a glowing report on the skinny 183-pound youngster. And on Kerr's recommendation, Foreman signed him for the bargain price of $20,000, plus a $4,000 bonus.

For Gervin, of course, it was a tremendous boost from the $80 per game he had been receiving with Pontiac, and it gave him the opportunity of a lifetime...to be a pro...even if the ABA was on shaky grounds.

And it put him on the same team with a youngster named Julius Erving.

His presence, however, caused havoc for the Squires' broadcasters, who then had to contend with George Gervin, Julius Erving and Geroge Irvine, all together on the same team and often on the court at the same time. Try saying those names three times quickly on a fast break.

Erving readily recognized his teammate's talents. "He's real good," said Dr. J. "He's an excellent shooter, and if you give him any room at all, he'll fill it up. He's also very quick."

At 6-8, Gervin figured to play up front. But injuries to guards Fatty Taylor and Bernie Williams forced Coach Al Bianchi to use Gervin in the backcourt. "He can handle the ball real well," noted Bianchi after employing Gervin as a guard. "In fact, he's a tremendous passer."

In his first season with Virginia, Gervin averaged 14.1 points per game in 30 games. The following season, 1973-74, he was averaging well above 20 points per game, when Foreman, in desperate need of cash, sold him to San Antonio for $225,000-$250,000 at the All-Star break.

Gervin finished that season with a 23.4 average, had exactly the same mark the following year, then averaged 21.8 in 1975-76, the ABA's final season.

When the ABA and NBA merged in the summer of '76, the underpublicized Gervin still was pretty much of an unknown commodity except to the pro basketball connoisseurs.

But he quickly proved he belonged among the best, averaging 23.1 points and making the All-League second team. "That year was important to me," said Gervin. "When I was in the ABA, all I heard was: 'Wait until you play in the real league.' We all had something to prove. I know I wanted to show that scoring nearly 25 points a game in the ABA was no fluke."

He did exactly that, and he did it as a guard. After having played his final three seasons in the ABA as a forward, Gervin was moved into the backcourt by Moe after the Spurs lost injured guard James Silas for the season.

Moe reasoned that playing in the backcourt would subject the frail Gervin to less physical punishment, while his height would work to his advantage. It was sound reasoning.

"I love it at guard," said Gervin. "I got guys four to six inches shorter guarding me. All I have to do is get close to the hoop and jump over them. I can get my shot off just about anytime I want.

"At first I didn't know what to expect," he continued. "Everything looked so different. But, boy was I glad to get away from all that bumping and pushing and hacking under the basket. You know, my body was not meant to be a target of other people's elbows.

"Even though I still move a lot without the ball and penetrate fairly close to the basket, I'm basically away from the heavy traffic. Instead of having to compete against people on every play who are anywhere from 6-9 to seven feet, I rarely see anybody over 6-5. And there ain't no way a player 6-5 can guard a man who is 6-8.

"Now I'm not saying that's the case all the time," added Gervin. "When I'm really hot, I get double-teamed and often I get held. But I don't fight it. I just hit the open man for the easy basket and pretty soon the opposition goes back to guarding me one-on-one. The only trouble is that I never get any credit for being a pretty good passer.

"I think it's a big advantage for us to have me in the backcourt. I can get a lot of offensive rebounds and also get my man in foul trouble by going down low and posting him."

"I'm very happy the way George adjusted to the backcourt," acknowledged Moe. "He creates a lot of problems for the other teams.

"Anything you say about him is safe to say," Moe said. "He doesn't play as well as any guard in the NBA, he plays better. He never takes a bad shot and he can get his shot off against anyone."

"I have a lot of confidence now and I play accordingly," admitted Gervin. "I get a lot of free shots. I'm more apt to take that outside shot now. I have confidence in my shot and I'm gonna take it. I just can't be stopped."

His opinion is shared by many who have tried to stop him. They have found it virtually impossible.

"He's too quick for a forward to guard and too big for a guard to guard," said Dave Bing, the veteran backcourtman of the Boston Celtics, who once coached Gervin at his summer camp in Detroit. "I've seen him since high school and he's the best. Nobody in the league can guard Gervin one-on-one. He's got it all. He can handle the ball, he's smooth and he can shoot. He can play any position he wants to."

"A lot of people have learned about Ice," said the inimitable Erving. "He doesn't say a lot. He just goes out and does it on the floor."

"George Gervin is probably one of the best basketball players on earth," said Boston's Curtis Rowe.

"We try to double-team him, but he scores anyway," said Rowe's teammate, Jo Jo White.

"He will score from places you don't think he can," observed Los Angeles' Lou Hudson. "And he keeps doing it."

"He can kill the other team without even

scoring because they worry about him so much," said Larry Staverman, Kansas City's general manager, who also served as interim coach last season.

The testimonials continue.

"He's so talented," said Tom Henderson of the Washington Bullets. "He can move. He can pick his shots. That's what makes him so effective."

"As soon as you try to overplay him or deny him the ball, they run the backdoor or get him down low," pointed out Henderson's backcourt partner, Kevin Grevey.

"Gervin teases you," said Armond Hill of the Atlanta Hawks. "He starts a drive and puts the ball out there for you to grab. But when you reach for it, he puts it someplace else. The man is unstoppable."

Hill's coach, Hubie Brown, agreed. "George is the greatest," said Brown. "Nobody in the league can stop him."

"To stop Ice, you beat Ice up," said Gervin's teammate, George Karl. "That worked in the past. But now he knows he's going to get slapped and bumped every time he goes for the shot, so it doesn't bother him. Norm Van Lier (of the Chicago Bulls) roughed him up so bad the last couple of times that Ice went for twins 37s against the Bulls. It's a joke. The man is just toying with the NBA."

Even Spurs center Billy Paulta, who played with Erving when Dr. J was at his greatest with the New York Nets of the ABA, said that Gervin "can do some things not even the Doc can do."

"Basically, all I want to do is be consistent and to sustain what I'm doing until I'm through playing," said Gervin. "But as long as we stay on top, I'm satisfied. I don't care what my (point) production is."

Said in a real cool team fashion, real cool.

Well, they don't call George Gervin "The Iceman" for nothing. ●

THE SUPERSONIC MAGIC— HOW IT WORKS

(Continued from page 36)

attitude was very negative. Our confidence was gone. It was said by other ball clubs that this was one of the worst in the league, but I had confidence in the players' ability on the floor and had to rebuild their confidence too. I wanted them to believe in themselves. So they would take the open shot without hesitation. So they would know one turnover or miss would not cause them to be removed."

Wilkens reputation as a judge of talent also was at stake last season. He had only three holdovers from Russell's club of the previous season and had hand-picked the remainder.

In a key deal made May 25, 1977, the Sonics traded Tom Burleson, Bobby Wilkerson and a second round draft pick to the Denver Nuggets for Paul Silas, Marvin Webster and Willie Wise. It's probably the worst deal the Nuggest will ever make.

Webster, known as the Human Eraser for his shot-blocking ability during his college days at Morgan State, and the veteran Silas provided the rebounding ability the Sonics had sorely lacked. Seattle became the best offensive rebounding team in the league and right near the top in total rebounding.

Webster, a 7-foot-1, 240-pounder, who was the Nuggets' No. 1 draft pick in 1975, had obtained an undeserved reputation at Denver as a substitute who just lacked stamina. "It was an unfair label," said Wilkens, "He had been very sick one season [with a serious kidney ailment] and he had only a chance to start five times at Denver when Dan Issel was hurt. He is outstanding for 35 minutes for us, a great passer, good on defense, a scorer when he has to be."

Webster never really recovered from his ailment until he came to Seattle last year. The only problem now is keeping him there. At this writing, Webster was a free agent, looking for bigger bucks. Wilkens, naturally, was hoping to hold on to Webster since the offense is geared around him, one of the tactics installed by Wilkens.

Silas, 35, had been called too old and a clubhouse lawyer, but Wilkens used him coming off the bench and he came through doing what he does best—grabbing rebounds. Silas had become upset about his stopover in Denver from Boston. He didn't figure in the Nuggets' offense, and his professional pride suffered. A lot of people figured at the time that Celtic GM Red Auerbach had pulled another shrewd deal in unloading a washed up veteran. But Silas proved all those cynics wrong as he became one of the Sonics leaders.

"I certainly never expected anything like this," Silas said during the latter stage of the season. "I thought there'd be a turn around for maybe three or four games because that's what usually happens when you change coaches. But then you fall into the same pattern."

So what happened? "The main thing Lenny did," said Silas, "was define everybody's role to the point where there was no more confusion on the court. And a big thing in making this was that we accepted our roles. For instance, Fred Brown and me had been starting. But Lenny sat us down and we accepted the change and pretty much went along with the philosophy that we were just happy to be there. Also, Lenny concentrated on trying to get the most out of each player's particular strength.

"And we are for real. This is a club with very strong rebounding, a good defense and a strong running game. I think we're something like third in the league in defense since Lenny took over, and I also think we can run with anybody in the league, except for Portland."

Since Wilkens took over the club he made only one move during the season.

He dealt Slick Watts, a popular player in Seattle but unhappy over being demoted from starter, to the New Orleans Jazz for a first round draft pick in 1981. To fill his spot he signed Al Fleming, cut earlier in the year by Seattle. Fleming had been playing for $100 a game with Anchorage in the Eastern League.

Wilkens installed rookie Jack Simka and veteran John Johnson at the starting forwards up front with Webster, the center. In the backcourt he gave starting jobs to Gus Williams and Dennis Johnson. Wally Walker, Bruce Seals and Joe Hassett were other reserves.

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Simka, a 6-11 first-round draft pick from Illinois Wesleyan, produced beyond expectations for Wilkens. Said Silas of the rookie find: "Jack reminds me a lot of Dave Cowens. He's a banger on the boards and improving steadily. He has a beautiful touch from the outside, and he's bigger than almost any forward he plays against."

Johnson, with whom Simka teamed so effectively at forward, was acquired in a strange preseason deal. Neither Houston or Boston wanted Johnson and his no-cut contract. So the Sonics surrendered two second-round draft picks to the Celtics, and Johnson became one of the club's leaders.

Williams, who had played at Golden State, was signed as a free agent by Seattle and became its top playmaker. Said Wilkens, "We look to run when he's in because we know he'll get the ball to the open man. He was just a victim of a contract dispute at Golden State."

Wilkens put together this unlikely band of athletes and nearly pulled off a miracle with an NBA championship. Let's call it a mini-miracle for even getting the Sonics past the Los Angeles Lakers, Portland Trail Blazers and Nuggets and into the championship final.

Webster said, "Lenny had a helluva effect on us. He's a positive thinker and he gave us positive reinforcement. He just doesn't dwell on negative things. He'll tell us what we did wrong but he doesn't harp on it. Hopkins, on the other hand, was under a lot of pressure to win right away. After a while, when things went wrong, everything just got out of hand. It's no reflection on Hopkins. I think everyone has a tendency to panic in that situation.

Johnson, who played for Wilkens at Portland, said, "Everyone became looser when Lenny took over. He gave guys a free and easy attitude, a vote of confidence. He showed he still had faith in us and forgot about the past. He told us we could still salvage something from this season if we had the desire."

In the Sonics' first game of the season, they had a starting lineup of Brown, a six-year veteran; Watts, four years; Seals, four years, and Silas, 13 years—a total of 27 years playing experience. During their resurgence under Wilkens, the Sonics started, Johnson, one-year; Williams, two years; Webster, two years as reserve; Simka, rookie, and Johnson, seven years—a total of 12 years experience, and just five years among four of the starters.

Wilkens made the moves although he admitted at the time that the club's biggest weakness was lack of experience. This was tempered, though, with Silas, Brown and Seals playing roles in coming off the bench.

Despite the quick turnaround under Wilkens he knew there would be a crisis period. It came when the Sonics lost three in a row. "It was the first time we were in a slump," he said, knowing his hold on the team was being tested. "I think the team exceeded my expectations a little because we won so many games so quick. Now I'm getting a little bit more impatient, a little bit frustrated. But the character is there and I believe in them. We've just got a lot to learn."

There weren't too many other tough times during the regular season for the Sonics as they played cohesive, winning ball and almost took all the marbles.

Wilkens, whose picture was displayed on posters and billboards in Seattle when he was a player there, was fully appreciated for a job well done by the Seattle fans. During the playoffs against Washington, one of the fans brought a green and white sign which said, "Lenny For King."

Unlike many of his fellow coaches, Wilkens doesn't kick chairs, stomp feet or hurl invectives at the officials. He sits or stands with his arms folded, his lips pursed, his face expressionless, seemingly under some kind of spell. He had been cool and collected as a player and his demeanor hasn't changed as a coach.

"My personality isn't important," he said. "I don't think it has anything to do with the team. I'm as effective as a raving lunatic. Who would you listen to? Yelling and screaming is not my nature. I make the players understand, though.

Rod Thorn, now general manager of the Chicago Bulls, said, "What Lenny has done is incredible. Dr. Naismith [who invented basketball] couldn't have done it. The players respect him because of who he is and he is great for some of the fragile egos on the Sonics.

"It was a surprise to me that Lenny went back because there were hard feelings when he left. But Schulman is a progressive owner and he realized Lenny is a natural in Seattle. It was a public relations corp. because the team was struggling."

Wilkens admitted, "I think I'm a better coach now. If you keep your eyes open you will mature and grow. I think I understand the game pretty good and I think I've helped some this year. I like working with kids, too. These kids get along well. And all of us have to realize that not every player reads the court the same way. It would not be fair for me to try to make them see the game the same way I did."

After losing the final game of the championship series 105-99, the fans at the Seattle Coliseum, who had sent tremors through the arena during most of the game, sat in stunned silence.

Wilkens was shaken and found it difficult to find words. Unlike him, his manner was curt. "When you get emotionally pent up about winning the NBA championship, it's hard to be gracious afterward. We wanted it badly," he said.

The following day thousands lined the streets of Seattle to honor their heroes. A huge billboard towed by a truck told the story—"Number two and pround of it." It was supposed to be a victory parade, but the Bullets changed that. Twenty-thousand fans waited at the parade's end at University Street. Wilkens, who shared the parade's lead auto with Mayor Charles Royer, said, "It's been a fantastic year. The team came through much adversity and I think they played like true champions."

The slipper didn't fit for this Cinderella team, but they came mighty close in a year when nobody gave them a chance. ●

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SIDNEY WICKS, THE MAN THEY LOVE TO HATE

(Continued from page 17)

ciplined team concept of the game. "When Sidney arrived here," explains Wooden, "he wasn't playing under control. Although he always made things happen when we put him in, for a while not all of them were good."

Wicks himself puts it this way—"It was a difficult year. I was used to playing. And when I got a chance, I started pressing. I tried too hard and made too many mistakes."

Until his junior year, that is, when Wicks finally learned that one on five basketball wouldn't get him anything but a bad case of splinters. Teaming with the man who'd beaten him out the year before, his present Celtics' teammate, Curtis Rowe, Wicks lead the Bruins in scoring and rebounding as his team captured the NCAA championship the next two years in a row. Everybody's All-American, Wicks was "the best forward in college basketball" according to Los Angeles Lakers general manager, Fred Schaus, who then went on to say, "And I'm not so sure he's that far away from being the best forward in basketball."

Evidently quite a few others felt the same way because when graduation rolled around along with the NBA draft, Wicks was chosen second overall by the Portland Trailblazers.

"I'm very enthusiastic about going to Portland," exclaimed Wicks. "I'm familiar with the northwest and I like it very much."

Either Wicks was "extremely naive" as he claimed five years later or else he was toying with the truth. In the first place, Wicks also called the city of Portland "a passive verb" and made it abundantly clear that he would've rather been playing for his hometown Lakers. In the second place, Wicks made it even clearer that the only reason he's chosen Portland over the ABA's Texas Chapparels was, "The Trailblazers offered me more money."

Nonetheless, Portland went absolutely blooey over Wicks and the Blazers before the 1971-72 season. After all, with Geoff Petrie coming off his co-rookie of the year campaign, couldn't the Blazers make a legitimate run for the playoffs? Even the press got carried away. "Sporting a full beard for the rookie camp," wrote one enamored scribe, "Wicks looked strikingly like a black Abraham Lincoln which is not an inappropriate likeness in terms of inner strength and character either."

Needless to say, Abe didn't lead the Blazers to the promised land that first season. In fact, he didn't even lead them out of last place. Oh, not that he hadn't given it an honest shot—2,008 points, the only rookie to play in the All-Star Game, rookie of the year by a landslide vote. Wicks seemed to be living up to his advance billing. "The quickest forward in the game," declared Dave DeBusschere and Bill Bridges. "Impossible to stop," added Greg Smith. "I hate his guts," snapped teammate, Geoff Petrie.

Why? "We felt threatened by each other and were childish," explains the Princeton graduate. "I guess if you wanted to boil down the problem, it came out that Sidney didn't think I gave up the ball enough and I thought Sidney took too many bad 25 foot jumpers." Petrie, who saved Wicks from drowning in the Sea of Galilee during a team trip to Israel after the 1971-72 season, wasn't the young star's only critic. Nor was he the only object of Wicks' disdain.

"I was aiming higher," expounds Wicks. "If Geoff was playing wrong, it wasn't his fault. It was the fault of the coach who should have told him to stop and play the right way."

Ahh the coach—the goat to whom all blame must be ascribed, all of Wicks' and the Blazers' problems be attributed. . . Except Roland Todd was fired three quarters of the way through Wicks' rookie season. His successor, Jack McCloskey, didn't fare too well either. And neither did his replacement, Len Wilkens, who certainly doesn't seem to be performing too ineptly these days as head coach of the Seattle Supersonics. None of them could earn Wicks' respect much less stop him and Petrie from sniping at each other, the two of them at Bill Walton when the big redhead joined the Blazers in 1974. None of them, that is, until Jack Ramsey.

"I'm seeking advice from everyone in the organization," announced Ramsey to Blazers' trainer, Ron Culp, among others before the beginning of the 1976-77 season. "What would you advise?"

"Trade Sidney Wicks," was Culp's immediate reply.

"And if I don't?" countered Ramsey.

"Rent—don't buy a house."

Needless to say, Ramsey took Culp's advice and peddled Geoff Petrie to Atlanta for good measure. Wicks, about to begin the option year of his original five year contract, certainly had no intentions of resigning with the Blazers anyway. Whom he would finally sign with remained a mystery. "I'll play for whoever offers me the most money," he maintained but when the Blazers tried to sell him to the New Orleans Jazz, Wicks refused to report to his new team. "I don't want to play for another loser," he declared thus unleashing a fury unknown in the deep south since Rhett told Scarlett he didn't give a damn. Jazz vice president, Barry Mendelsohn, pretended not to either. "As far as I'm concerned," he said, "Wicks isn't half the player that Pete Maravich is or half the human being that any player on the Jazz is either." But despite the rumors that were beginning to spread—that Wicks and former Blazers' assistant coach, Tom Meschery, had engaged in more than one violent argument; that Wicks refused to pick up towels during his rookie year, a Blazer initiation rite that everyone else had undergone; that Wicks was a gunner who cared only about personal statistics—Mendelsohn and most other NBA executives couldn't help but covet the big forward's talent. After all, hadn't Wicks averaged over twenty points a game not to mention being a perennial all-star ever since he'd come into the league?

"I used to go after guys who'd played on winning teams in college," declared Boston Celtics' general manager and the most successful coach in NBA history, Red Auerbach. "Wicks knows what it is to win

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he'll pay the price he has to pay."

And so prompted by Auerbach, Celtics then owner, Irv Levin, bought Wicks' contract from the Blazers. Auerbach was elated. "If Levin wasn't my boss," he cracked, "I'd give him a raise."

So was Celtics' then coach, Tom Heinsohn—"I think it's understandable that if Sidney didn't like it in Portland," he commented, "he wouldn't like it in New Orleans either."

So were Celtics' fans. Granted, Wicks was coming to Boston with a tarnished reputation but hadn't Charlie Scott done the same the season before? He'd fit in just fine. And besides, there was the matter of Paul Silas.

Silas, the uncanny offensive rebounder and power forward supreme was embroiled in a contract dispute with the Celtics at the same time the team obtained Wicks. Now if he came to terms, the Celtics' foward corps would be awesome. If he didn't, then with Wicks in the lineup, he wouldn't be missed nearly so much.

Or would he?

1976-77 was the year that Dave Cowens left basketball. It was also the year that Paul Silas was traded to Denver. It was also the year that Sidney Wicks was asked to fill in for both and more often than not, play sixth man as well. Although such Celtics greats as Frank Ramsay and John Havlicek had once flourished in the part, Wicks found that he "couldn't find his groove without enough playing time." Celtics fans, not used to griping from their idols, took this to be an act of sedition and booed Wicks unmercifully but not nearly so much as when Charlie Scott broke his arm and Wicks upped his contract demands to exorbitant heights. "He's done everything I've asked of him," rushed Tom Heinsohn to his forward's defense. But one couldn't help feeling that neither he nor anyone else was convinced.

The confirmation came last season when Wicks who finally signed with the team three days before the opening game, was asked to play the role of power forward. His scoring style thwarted by the nature of that role, Wicks proceeded to let the rest of his game go to hell as well. His once vaunted defense became nonexistent. He drew frequent fouls, turned the ball over regularly and actually prompted New York Knicks broadcaster, Marv Albert, to say—"That's Wicks' fifth personal. Knick fans better hope that he doesn't foul out."

The once proud Celtics lost game after game. The fans blamed Wicks, and so did the Boston press. "Are we supposed to accept calmly that the same team that couldn't find the money for Paul Silas has paid Portland $500,000 to obtain the services of this practically useless and stupendously overpaid player?" wrote one Boston columnist. "We're the ones who must watch Wicks get beaten on defense, throw up air balls, trail every fast break and make life seven times harder for Dave Cowens than it was to be. The only thing Wicks leads the league in is meaningless statistics."

And anonymous cracks from his teammates as well. Some said that Wicks would drop half court passes on purpose because he "wasn't supposed to be a scorer," as he'd whine. When Wicks underwent an eye operation this past summer, one of his teammates simply quipped, "They should've operated on his hands too."

And yet after Heinsohn was fired halfway through last season and new coach, Tom Sanders, recast Wicks in the scorer role he plays best, those notorious hands seemed to function just fine. So did Wicks' shooting eye, his reflexes on defense, his rebounding instincts. Could it be that Wicks refused to put out till he got his own way?

"Sidney Wicks thinks he's God's gift to basketball," spits George McGinnis, hardly a portrait in humility himself. But nonetheless, McGinnis may have hit upon a real, far reaching point. Wicks, like many of today's pro stars, believes he's indispensible. The problem is though that on last year's Celtics' team, Wicks was indispensible. The only time in his career he wasn't was at UCLA where John Wooden could afford to seat him on the bench until he learned the art of sublimating his own personal glory to that of the team. It's a lesson that obviously didn't take and probably never will because of the inherent nature of professional basketball. Coaches no longer have the simple choices of whom to play, when and how much. There's too much money at stake to keep a Sidney Wicks inactive if he's not playing well. And so unless Wicks sees eye to eye with his coach on what his role with the team should be, that team can expect as long a season as that which the Celtics suffered through last year, as they may very well suffer through again unless Wicks and those like him remember the lessons they learned in college and perform with the pride they did back then.

Cousy, Russell, Sharman, Havlicek—their numbers, among others, hang from the rafters of Boston Gardens. Someday Sidney Wicks might find his number there too . . . with him still wearing it. The fans of Boston are losing their patience. They've seen great players before but never one who so blatantly wastes such a prodigious amount of talent. ●

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